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THE ROLE OF CITIZENSHIP CLASSES IN NAVIGATING
THE NATURALIZATION PROCESS

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Political Science

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Kathy Krainak

May 2002

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Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the
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Committee

Josaphan Benjamin - Alvarado
James B. Schum
José G. Guevara

Chairperson Larry Sykes

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THE ROLE OF CITIZENSHIP CLASSES IN NAVIGATING THE NATURALIZATION PROCESS

Kathy Krainak, M. S.

University of Nebraska, 2002

Advisor: Dr. Loree Gerdes Bykerk, Ph. D.

This study assesses the relevance, accessibility, and effectiveness of U. S. Citizenship Preparation courses, specifically in relation to student outcomes. A historical perspective of laws and practices related to immigration and naturalization lays the groundwork for a discussion of current policies and procedures which impact residents who desire to naturalize. Citizenship courses in the Omaha, Nebraska, area are evaluated to determine the extent to which they are accessible and affordable to the targeted population and how well they teach the skills and knowledge needed to complete the naturalization process. Omaha residents who were formerly enrolled in citizenship courses were interviewed for this study to determine how effectively the courses prepared them for naturalization. The majority of students found the courses very helpful and all of the students who submitted to the INS interview after taking citizenship courses became naturalized citizens. However, the majority of students did not perceive that taking the courses improved their performance on the INS interview. Questions were raised as to whether structured courses are the most efficient and effective vehicles for providing naturalization assistance. Further study is warranted to gauge the effectiveness of citizenship courses

vis-a-vis alternate methods of delivery, such as community workshops or agency walk-in assistance.

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CHAPTER 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO NATURALIZATION ASSISTANCE

A number of research studies in the past three decades have sought to explain why some permanent residents naturalize and others do not. The decision against naturalization is often, but not always, due to factors outside the control of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Many permanent residents who are eligible for citizenship choose not to apply because of the relative meaning, value, and priority they place on U. S. citizenship. Many have priorities in their day-to-day lives--such as raising families, working long hours, and struggling to stay afloat financially--that are much more immediate than gaining citizenship (Portes and Curtis 1987). Others perceive the difference in status between permanent resident and citizen to be inconsequential, and therefore do not bother to become naturalized (Schneider 2001). Still others place great value on the citizenship of their home country, and simply do not want to change nationalities (Garcia 1981; Pachon 1987). None of these reasons for retaining permanent resident status fall within the purview of the INS.

There are, however, a number of reasons for not naturalizing that do fall within the realm of the agency's control. In separate studies, Alvarez (1987) and Grebler (1966) investigated the experiences of newly naturalized Latinos and found that the INS was regarded as a hindrance, rather than a help, to gaining citizenship. The application and interview process were viewed as confusing and unnecessarily complicated. Inconsistent administration of the English and civics portions of the interview caused a great deal of anxiety among even well prepared applicants. It was common to find that applicants

endured long waits in INS offices and rude and inconsistent treatment by INS employees. Many were fearful that their applications would be denied and that they would be deported as a result. In all fairness, just because a person is ineligible for naturalization does not mean he or she is deportable. Nonetheless, applicants are well aware that the service arm of the INS is inexorably linked to the stronger enforcement arm of the agency, and that enforcement of immigration law often means detention or deportation. Fear of the INS is especially prevalent among Latinos; this is not surprising, considering that 90% of INS law enforcement is targeted at Latinos, although Latinos comprise a much smaller portion of the undocumented population (Yzaguirre 1996). Latino applicants naturalize at a much lower rate than non-Latinos (Portes and Curtis 1987; Smith and Edmonston 1997), and are denied citizenship at a much higher rate than non-Latinos (U. S. DOJ INS 1999).

The Citizenship Boom

In the seven years from 1993 to 2000, nearly 6.9 million immigrants applied for United States citizenship, more than in the previous 40 years combined. This citizenship boom created an enormous backlog in the Immigration and Naturalization Service, which caused the agency to rethink and revise its way of doing business. Efficiency measures and streamlined processes allowed the INS to cut its backlog of 1.8 million pending naturalizations at the beginning of Fiscal Year 1999 to less than 600,000 by the end of Fiscal Year 2001 (U. S. DOJ INS 2001). This achievement significantly reduced the waiting time for application processing. In 1998, an applicant faced a wait of two-and-

one-half years to have his or her application processed. As of fiscal year 2001, the wait has shrunk to approximately six months.

As naturalization rates have soared to unprecedented levels, a new trend has emerged: the rate of denial of applications, relative to the rate of naturalizations, has risen exponentially. During the 1980s, the INS denied an average of one application for every 40-50 approved applications. By 1994, the ratio rose to one denial for every 10 approvals (1:10), and in 1999 the ratio increased to one denial for every two approvals (1:2). That ratio has remained steady for the two years since (US DOJ INS 1999; U. S. DOJ INS 2001). Whereas a few short years ago the question was how to motivate eligible permanent residents to apply for naturalization, it is now the case that huge numbers of residents (almost 400,000 in the year 2000 alone) are applying and being denied.

According to the INS, the most common reasons for denial of applications are: (1) the applicant does not meet all of the eligibility requirements, or (2) the applicant lacks the English proficiency required to pass the naturalization interview. If these reasons are reflected in the huge numbers of administrative denials in recent years, it seems that a large population of permanent residents are applying for citizenship without sufficient knowledge and understanding of INS process and requirements. In other words, there appears to be an information gap between the INS and a huge share of its clients.

The INS has not made an official statement regarding the reasons for the increases in denials, but agency officials have speculated that part of the increase in denials can be attributed to the fact that applications had sat in processing for so long that they became

outdated. Because INS officers could not reach applicants whose addresses and phone numbers had changed, tens of thousands of applications were administratively denied. To respond to criticisms regarding the high numbers of administrative denials, the agency established a 24-hour toll-free hotline for address and telephone number changes.

Studies of newly naturalized citizens have shown that the majority took advantage of outside assistance, in one form or another, either before or during the naturalization process (Alvarez 1987; Pachon and DeSipio 1994). With quality assistance, the requirements of citizenship—from completing the application, to preparing for the interview, to studying the English language—become much more manageable. In *Americans by Choice*, Pachon and DeSipio (1994) used data from the National Latino Immigrant Survey to investigate the experiences of Latinos with regard to naturalization and the political process. The researchers found that over 80% of naturalized citizens had studied English since arriving in the United States, and about 20% took English classes for the specific purpose of preparing for naturalization. Nearly 80% of naturalized citizens also studied U. S. History and Civics, and about 37% studied those subjects in order to prepare for naturalization. Likewise, Alvarez (1987) found that the majority of newly naturalized citizens in his ethnographic study had received naturalization assistance and support from sources such as immigration help centers, citizenship classes, and legal aid. Others were assisted by friends, family, churches, and even labor unions. Alvarez noted that support and encouragement, as well as advice and instruction, were crucial in helping individuals navigate the naturalization process.

Although the literature supports the assertion that naturalization assistance can be very helpful to permanent residents, there have not been any studies published to date that provide a thorough evaluation of such assistance. As a result, there is no basis for conclusions as to the accessibility and effectiveness of such services. If such services are indeed effective, and if the need for naturalization assistance is greater than that which can be met by basic education programs and community-based organizations, there may be a call for the federal government to absorb more of the cost and responsibility for providing such assistance.

Research Questions

The growing numbers of permanent residents eligible for and seeking naturalization suggest that the need for naturalization assistance is indeed rising. The soaring numbers of denied applications in recent years seem to point to this conclusion as well. While it is difficult to thoroughly investigate informal types of assistance, such as the assistance freely given by friends and family, it is quite possible to take a closer look at more structured forms of assistance, such as citizenship classes offered in schools, churches, and immigration help centers. In this study, I will be exploring the visibility and accessibility of citizenship classes in order to answer the question of how effectively such courses reach the population in need of naturalization assistance. I will be looking at where the classes are offered, how much they cost, and how they are promoted. More importantly, I will analyze how closely these classes are tied to current INS requirements for naturalization. Ideally, the content of citizenship classes would be based on the skills and knowledge needed to successfully complete the naturalization process. Finally, I will

measure the outcomes of the classes, to determine how effective they are in preparing permanent residents to complete the naturalization process, pass the INS interview, and ultimately become a United States citizen. A summary of the three main research questions follows:

1. How accessible are citizenship courses to those in need of naturalization assistance?
2. How closely are the curricula of citizenship courses related to the skills and knowledge needed to complete the naturalization process?
3. How effective do students perceive citizenship courses to be in helping them prepare for naturalization?

A Look Ahead

In the next chapter, naturalization policies and processes will be explored from the time of the country's formation until today. Because immigration and naturalization are so closely linked, the evolution of immigration policy will also be described. Periods of major immigration waves from Europe, Asia, and Latin America will be addressed, as will the response of the federal government to these waves—through inclusive or exclusive immigration and naturalization policies. Of particular importance to this study are those policies that had a distinct impact on naturalization patterns. For example, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 had a huge impact on the numbers of residents naturalizing in the mid-1990s. Likewise, the initiation of the Citizenship USA program in the mid-1990s vastly expanded the ability of the INS to process applications

and respond to the backlog of naturalizations; as a result, the United States gained more than one million naturalized citizens in 1996 alone (Aleinikoff 1996).

From studying the history of naturalization policy, the origins and intended purposes of current policies become clear. The policies that must be observed and the procedures that must be undertaken when making the transition from permanent resident to citizen will be described in detail. From eligibility requirements, to the application, the background check, the interview, and the swearing-in ceremony, I will trace the steps of the naturalization process. With citizenship comes many benefits, but there are also costs involved that go beyond application fees and time spent at the INS. The costs and benefits of naturalization will be explored as well. This will explain in part why some permanent residents naturalize as soon as they are eligible, others hold off for many years, and still others never naturalize.

Many permanent residents are eligible for naturalization, but lack the information, resources, and knowledge to complete the process. Residents such as these can be helped considerably through naturalization assistance (Alvarez 1987; Grebler 1996; Pachon and DeSipio 1994). In Chapter 3, various forms of naturalization assistance will be described, including legal aid, INS services, self-study resources, naturalization help centers, private help, and citizenship classes. In keeping with the purpose of this study, citizenship courses will be explored thoroughly, to determine at first blush the accessibility and content of the classes. Through documentation, research, and an analysis of popular citizenship texts, I will paint a picture of where these courses are taught, how they are structured, and what they teach. The provision of additional benefits

and assistance in the context of citizenship courses, such as transferable skills, support, and referrals to outside agencies, will be investigated as well.

Chapters 4 and 5 will be devoted to the original research component of this study. I will attempt to answer the three main research questions through field research, classroom observations, and interviews. Citizenship courses offered in Omaha, Nebraska, were observed and evaluated, and interviews were conducted with the coordinators and teachers of each course. Instruction methods were observed and texts, classroom materials, and assessments were evaluated. I searched primarily for evidence of how the courses teach the skills and knowledge needed to successfully complete the naturalization process, such as reading, writing and communicating in the English language, knowledge of U. S. history and government, interview techniques, and understanding of the naturalization process. Inquiries were also be made throughout the community to gauge the visibility and accessibility of these citizenship courses.

In Chapter 4, a total of three citizenship courses will be evaluated, one of which is offered through the Omaha Public Schools (OPS) Adult Basic Education program at 12 locations in the Omaha area. The remaining two classes are offered through a private grant and through the Adult Basic Education program at Metropolitan Community College, respectively. Each course will be evaluated in terms of accessibility to immigrant populations and in terms of the curricula and instructional methodologies. The curricula will be assessed primarily to determine to what extent students are taught the skills needed to successfully naturalize, including English literacy, civics instruction, and instruction in the various steps of the naturalization process. Inquiries will also be

made into whether topics related to citizenship are taught in the course, topics such as the costs and benefits of naturalization, the importance of political participation, the rights and duties of citizens, and the democratic process.

In Chapter 5, I will evaluate the measurable outcomes of the citizenship courses. Through interviews with current and former students, I will explore their perceptions of how well the courses prepared them to complete the naturalization process. I will gauge their perceptions of the relative usefulness of various components of the classes, such as English conversation, application guidance, and interview practice. I will also seek to determine the effect of moral support on the part of instructors and volunteers in motivating and instilling confidence in students. In the course of the interviews, factors such as educational level, English proficiency, and other background information were collected for each student, to determine how individual needs impact the value he or she places on the course

Chapter 6 will conclude the study by summarizing the findings and suggesting policy changes at the federal and community level that would help facilitate naturalization assistance. I will take a broader look at the naturalization requirements themselves and assess the appropriateness in terms of the needs of immigrants and the expectations of the U. S. government in regards to its citizenry. I will also take a look at proposals currently on the governmental agenda that may serve to reform the naturalization process. I will discuss the extent to which these reforms would promote naturalization, preserve or enhance the integrity of the INS, and encourage civic

participation. Suggestions will also be made in regards to further research into this and related topics.

CHAPTER 2

NATURALIZATION POLICY AND PROCESS

Throughout the nation's history, the federal government has encountered a persistent dilemma in regard to its naturalization laws. On one hand, it has tried to make citizenship accessible and trouble-free; on the other hand, it has tried to ensure that new citizens are committed to the nation and do not threaten the economy or national security. In the early years of the 20th century, the federal government dealt with the issue of corruption on the part of the agents who were facilitating naturalizations: local courts, politicians, and political parties who naturalized immigrants to suit their own political ends. Beginning in the 1960s, a new dilemma was added to the mix: citizenship became relatively accessible and civil rights for women and minorities improved—however, rights and benefits to permanent residents also become more accessible. As a result, naturalization lost value and meaning relative to its earlier status.

Peaks in naturalization in the past ten years can be partially attributed to legislation that has again made being a permanent resident (rather than a citizen) less desirable. Legislation such as California's Proposition 187 in 1994 and the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 chipped away at the rights and security of immigrants (Feldblum and Klusmeyer 1999; DeSipio 2001). The 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act increased the number of crimes that could result in deportation or bar a permanent resident from returning to the United States after a voluntary departure. Fear of losing rights, benefits, or social status for

themselves and their children led many permanent residents to seek the political status of citizen. Others naturalized more out of anger than fear: they strongly disagreed with anti-immigrant legislation and wanted to vote against such measures in the future (Schneider 2001).

Evolution of Naturalization Policy

Federal regulation of citizenship goes back to the Naturalization Act of 1790, which mandated that, in order to become naturalized, immigrants had to be “free white persons” who had lived continuously in the United States for two years. The implementation of naturalizations was to be handled by state courts. Naturalization regulations underwent a number of revisions in the ensuing decade, before the Naturalization Acts of 1802 established the following requirements: five years of residency, an oath of allegiance to the United States, the signatures of two witnesses attesting to one’s moral character, and a “declaration of intention” to naturalize, which had to be filed two years prior to naturalization (U. S. DOJ INS 1998). What had not changed, however, was the exclusion of all non-white immigrants and enslaved persons from access to citizenship.

The 19th century brought the inclusion of some and the explicit exclusion of many others from the rights of citizenship. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 granted U. S. citizenship to former Mexican citizens living in U. S. territory, and classified Mexicans under the “white” umbrella. Following the Civil War, persons of African descent were included in the citizenry as well. As the citizenry began to grow in diversity, however, a number of setbacks prevented the full inclusion of such groups as

Mexican-Americans, Chinese-Americans, and African-Americans into American society. For example, even though Mexican-Americans had been guaranteed citizenship with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, state laws in the Southwest stripped them of property rights and other citizenship rights. Likewise, African Americans in the Southern states were subject to “Jim Crow” laws that deprived them of voting rights, property rights, and the most basic civil rights. Chinese immigrants were declared to be unfit for citizenship in a series of court decisions beginning in 1878 and ending with the 1898 Wong Kim Ark decision. In *United States v. Wong Kim Ark*, the Supreme Court cited the 14th Amendment to grant citizenship to persons of Chinese descent born in the United States, but preserved the power of the federal government to deny naturalization benefits to Chinese immigrants (DeSipio 2001; Schneider 2001).

The Federal Government asserted more extensive control over the process of naturalization with the Naturalization Act of 1906. This was the first Act since 1802 to comprehensively regulate the naturalization process, and was the first ever to establish centralized control over the process (Garcia 1981). Previously, the administration of citizenship was almost entirely within the jurisdiction of state and local courts. The Act standardized naturalization procedures and fees and created a Division of Naturalization under the Federal Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, part of the Department of Commerce and Labor. The Naturalization Division was charged with collecting fees and petitions for citizenship and making determinations as to whether or not citizenship candidates should be recommended for court approval. The newly appointed Commissioner of Naturalization also collected statistical information on a uniform basis

for the first time. From the perspective of the applicants, the Act created new hurdles: a \$5.00 petition fee was now required, as were demonstrations of Constitutional knowledge and English language proficiency. Immigrants were also required to keep extensive records of their past residences, date of entry, and other personal information (Garcia 1981; Schneider 1991).

The Naturalization Act of 1906 was in part a response to the corruption of the naturalization process. For some time, urban political machines had co-opted the process by which immigrants were transformed into citizens (i. e. potential voters). Immigrants who were seen as likely supporters of a particular party would be offered assistance by ward bosses, who provided application papers, witnesses, and citizenship classes. By the late 19th century, judges appointed through the political machine would pay their respects to the machine by granting citizenship to hundreds of immigrants in a one day. This was especially common in the weeks and months preceding election days.

The 1906 Act was not only a crackdown on corruption but also an element of the overall backlash against immigration. Immigration rates were perceived to be too high and many immigrants were considered unfit to hold the status of American citizen. East Asian groups such as Chinese and Japanese were severely restricted from entering the United States and barred from citizenship if they were “lucky” enough to enter. As the new gatekeepers of the naturalization process, federal authorities were able to decide precisely who would be granted or denied citizenship. The new requirements, such as the petition fee, knowledge of English and civics, and record keeping, excluded less-educated and less-affluent immigrants from citizenship and added a “fear factor” into the mix.

Immigrants desiring citizenship were now faced with the real possibility that even if they were to attempt to navigate the hurdles, they might come up short and be denied.

Immigrants who were considered likely to become a public charge or suspected of immoral conduct were excluded from citizenship. As a result, certain groups were treated with particular suspicion: single women, Mexican laborers, Turkish Muslims, and Eastern Europeans, to name a few. The grounds for keeping out these groups were, respectively, suspected immorality, relative poverty, polygamy, and radicalism (Schneider 2001).

Not only did the government institutionalize preferences for a moral, self-sufficient and moderate citizenry, it also institutionalized a strong preference for households headed by men. From 1855 to 1922, women had a relatively easy time immigrating if they had family ties in the United States, and if they were married to a U. S. citizen, they became naturalized automatically. Furthermore, if a U. S.-born woman married a non-U. S. citizen, she lost her citizenship and did not regain it unless and until her husband became a naturalized citizen. The Cable Act of 1922 was instrumental in putting an end to the chauvinistic quality of naturalization law, making women and men subject to the same qualifications and requirements (Ueda 2001).

The statistical information collected by the office of the Commissioner of Naturalization proved how dramatically the Naturalization Act of 1906 slowed the naturalization rate. Completed naturalizations numbered approximately 26,000 in 1907

and less than 40,000 for the following two years.¹ Slowly, naturalizations increased as immigrants adapted somewhat to the complexity of the process. The 100,000 mark was exceeded by 1913, and the 200,000 mark was exceeded by 1919. Of course, these numbers pale in comparison to the 14.5 million people who emigrated to the United States between 1901-1920 (U. S. DOJ INS 2000). The vast majority of foreign-born persons living in the United States at that time had not become naturalized. (Schneider 2001; Ueda 2001).

Preparation for Citizenship

The first movement towards preparing immigrants for citizenship was less the kind gesture of helping people through an arduous process and more a coercive shove towards assimilation and “Americanization.” Wartime was not only a time of patriotism, but of suspicion and hostility toward non-citizens. During the First World War, the government facilitated a mass of citizenship programs to be carried out in public schools, civic organizations, and other civic-minded clubs and non-governmental agencies. The charge of such programs was to distribute and explain publications provided by the Federal Bureau of Naturalization. Such materials stressed the importance of civic duty, included a call to reject the language and culture of one’s homeland in favor of the American standard. The intended outcome was to improve the quality of naturalized citizens and assimilate “them” into “us.” Actual numbers of naturalizations declined during WWI, as immigrants employed passive resistance to the attacks on their cultural

¹ An accurate measure of the decrease in the naturalization rate is not readily available, because statistical records on naturalization rates prior to 1907 have not been published.

heritage. This inauspicious beginning to citizenship assistance programs continues to cast a shadow over present day programs (Pickus 1998).

What the Federal Bureau of Naturalization sparked during World War I spread like wildfire into schools, businesses, churches, patriotic organizations, social organizations, and the Boy Scouts of America (Tyack 2001). Pressure to naturalize mounted, as employers began to require U. S. citizenship for their employees and link citizenship to promotions (Schneider 2001). Public schools found a place for civic instruction in the curriculum and, by 1923, 43 states required teaching of American History in elementary and secondary schools. Likewise, foreign-language instruction in schools and even speaking languages other than English in public were forbidden in certain states. Suspicion of and hostility towards non-citizens continued to rise throughout the decade, culminating in the Red Scare of 1919-1920 (Tyack 2001).

During this time, the only naturalization-assistance program (if it could be labeled a program) that had a positive effect was the new procedure for military naturalizations. A 1918 federal law mandated that members of the military be exempted from much of the hassle of becoming naturalized. The declaration of intention and the English/civics examination were no longer required of this group. If a soldier was willing to risk his life for the country, it was reasoned, he was demonstrating the ultimate civic duty and therefore deserved to be a U. S. citizen.

In the 1920s, Americanizers continued with their cause of providing citizenship instruction, even though the government had withdrawn its interest and support. Most of these courses were offered in public schools during the evening. In the absence of a

government-mandated curriculum, the quality of the classes actually improved from the 1930s to 1940s (Tyack 2001). Better-trained teachers were employed, and textbooks were written that were less prejudicial. Immigrants were much more receptive to these courses once the content shifted from “lessons in assimilation” to the more straightforward, neutral delivery of English-language and American History lessons. Women were particularly drawn to these classes, because they provided a socially acceptable opportunity to simply go out in public and interact during the evening, something that could not be taken for granted at the time (Schneider 2001).

A surge in naturalizations characterized the 1920s, particularly among Southern and Eastern Europeans. The primary reason for this phenomenon was the passage of immigration quota laws between 1921 and 1924. The quotas favored immigrants from Western and Northern Europe, and disfavored immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe. At the same time, the laws gave preference to spouses and minor children of U. S. citizens. As a result, large numbers of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe naturalized so that their families could join them in the States. Another reason for the surge in naturalizations, not only among Southern and Eastern Europeans, was the expansion of the social and political rights that accompanied citizenship. The 1920s saw a huge increase in educational opportunities at the secondary and college levels. Government-funded social services began to grow as well. In many states, citizens were given preference for educational opportunities and social services. Certain benefits, such as mothers’ pensions were reserved exclusively for citizens in some states. These benefits surely weighed in estimating the costs and benefits of naturalization.

Legislation impacting naturalization in the following decades was particularly positive for East Asian groups, who had endured a legacy of discrimination in this arena. The Chinese-Exclusion Act was repealed in 1943, and a very small quota was established for the admission of Chinese immigrants. Even more significantly, the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 banned all prohibitions of naturalization based on race, stating that “the right of a person to become a naturalized citizen shall not be denied or abridged because of race, sex, or because such a person is married” (Garcia 1981, p. 611). For the first time, Japanese and Koreans were eligible for citizenship. Japanese immigrants responded convincingly, and thousands naturalized within two years of the law’s passage (Schneider 2001).

In 1965, the nationality quotas that had so rigidly defined immigration were abolished. Immigrant visas were now allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis, with preferences for relatives of U. S. citizens and permanent residents, and for persons with job-related skills that were needed in the United States. Immediate families of U. S. citizens and special categories of immigrants, such as ministers, former governmental employees, and foreign medical graduates, were not subject to numerical restrictions. The preference for immediate relatives of U. S. citizens remains in effect to this day and has been instrumental in facilitating the migration of Asians and Latin Americans (DeSipio 2001).

Beginning in the 1960s the line between permanent resident and citizen blurred to such an extent that naturalization became less and less of a necessity. The Great Society social programs of the 1960s provided an economic safety net to citizens and permanent

residents alike. Likewise, civil rights legislation that offered social and political protections for minorities extended to permanent residents of the affected racial and ethnic minority groups. Besides the right to vote and the U. S. passport, there came to be very little difference in the rights and benefits afforded citizens and permanent residents (Contreras 2002; Schneider 2001).

The blurred line between permanent resident and citizen clearly had an impact on naturalization rates at the time. During the 1970s and 1980s, naturalization rates trailed further and further behind rising immigration rates. The number of foreign-born U. S. residents increased by a third in the 1970s and another third in the 1980s, while the percentage of naturalized residents declined. In 1990, just two in five foreign-born residents were naturalized citizens. This constituted the lowest naturalization rate ever recorded by the U. S. Census (DeSipio 2001).

Two landmark immigration laws were passed in the 1980s that granted permanent residency to two groups that had been all but ignored in previous legislation: undocumented workers and refugees. In response to the burgeoning flow of refugees from the Soviet Union and Southeast Asia, the Refugee Act of 1980 created a comprehensive procedure for handling refugee admissions. The Act also allowed for approximately one million refugees to become permanent residents in the 1980s, and an additional million in the 1990s. In 1986, the Immigration Reform and Control Act was passed to address the growing numbers of undocumented workers in the United States. The Act imposed stiff penalties on businesses that employed such workers, tightened border control, and facilitated swift deportations of persons crossing the border illegally.

At the same time, amnesty was granted to undocumented persons who had resided in the United States continuously since January 1, 1982. In most cases, persons granted amnesty were given temporary status that would be later adjusted to permanent status. Special provisions were made for Cubans and Haitians; these groups were granted permanent residency status promptly (Juffras 1991).

The gap between the statuses of citizen and permanent resident would widen again in the 1990s. Unfortunately, this was not the result of greater benefits to citizens but instead the result of lesser benefits afforded to permanent residents. Proposition 182 in California and the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) drastically restricted immigrants' access to public assistance, although in both cases restrictions were lifted within a year of being imposed. Under the Personal Responsibility Act, permanent and temporary residents were barred from obtaining food stamps and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). To be eligible for other federal means-tested assistance programs, legal immigrants were made to wait 5 years after entering the United States. The Act also allowed states more flexibility in setting their benefit eligibility rules, so that states could bar legal immigrants from state programs as well. On the other hand, illegal immigrants were almost completely barred from receiving federal, state, or local public benefits. The INS was charged with verifying the immigration status of any immigrant who requested federal benefits (Swingle 2000).

The Personal Responsibility Act was in line with the anti-immigrant mood in the 1990s, whereby immigrants were thought to be straining the country's housing, public

health, education, and job resources. The Act was rationalized with the perceptions that (1) public assistance hinders the motivation of immigrants to “get ahead,” and (2) immigrants use welfare benefits disproportionately (Contreras 2002). Researchers at Harvard and the Barents Group supported the latter perception by finding that twenty-six percent of immigrant households used some form of welfare prior to the implementation of the Act (Borjas and Hilton 1996). However, individual immigrant participation rates were not significantly higher than native rates. Furthermore, only 16 percent of foreign-born residents living below the poverty line were receiving cash-based welfare, compared to 25 percent of native-born persons living below the poverty line. As for the perception that public assistance hinders motivation, it has been argued that a distinction should have been made between “hand-outs” and “hand-ups,” when barring non-citizens from receiving assistance (Aronson 1996). While handouts, such as cash benefits, may indeed reduce the incentive to work, hand-ups, such as student loans, school lunches, and Medicare, have been shown to be socially beneficial in the long run, by improving the standard of health and educational attainment among the less affluent.

The impact of the Personal Responsibility Act was lessened somewhat by the passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. This act partially restored benefits to “qualified aliens,” meaning permanent residents, refugees, asylees, and immigrants from Cuba and Haiti who either met 10-year work requirements, had served in the military, or were family members of current or former military personnel. Elderly and disabled recipients saw their eligibility restored for Supplemental Security Income and Medicaid. While not a complete reversal of the restrictions imposed by the Personal Responsibility

Act, the Balanced Budget Act nevertheless succeeded in restoring the safety net for those deemed most deserving, or most in need, of limited forms of public assistance. However, many immigrants for whom benefits have been restored refuse to claim those benefits, for fear of being considered a public charge and risking deportation. This is particularly evident among young mothers, who are forgoing prenatal care, nutrition programs, and children's immunization programs (Contreras 2002; Swingle 2000).

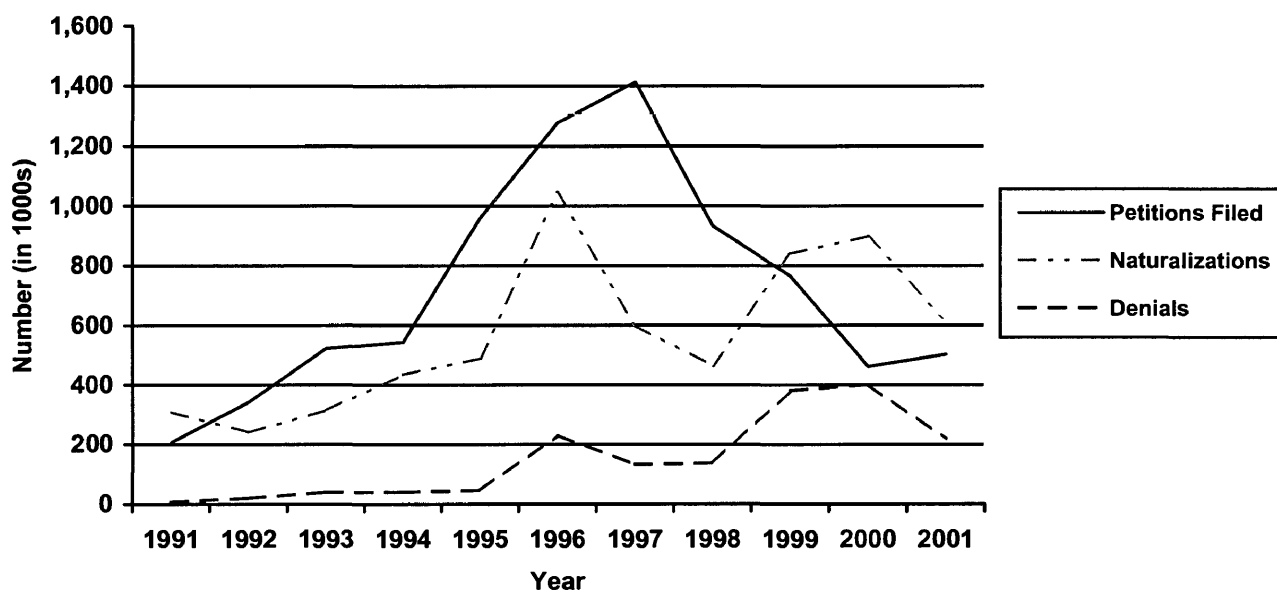
If the Personal Responsibility Act was used as a stick to widen the gap between permanent residents and citizens, the Clinton Administration's Citizenship USA program was used as a carrot to entice permanent residents to naturalize. Citizenship USA was a program designed by the INS Commissioner to deal with the mounting backlog of naturalization applications in the early-to-mid-1990s. Naturalization applications were turned in at an unprecedented rate, due in large part to the legislation during the 1980s that granted permanent residency status to millions of undocumented workers and refugees. Those permanent residents were now eligible for citizenship and were choosing to take advantage of their eligibility. The INS reported 800,000 pending applications at the end of the 1995 Fiscal Year, and had only enough staff and resources to handle about half of those applications. In some cities, permanent residents were waiting two years from the time they submitted their application to the time of their interview.

The Citizenship USA program focused on streamlining the processing of applications, hiring 1000 new personnel, and partnering with schools, community organizations, and state and local governments to provide better services to residents

applying for citizenship. For the first time since the 1920s, the federal government was promoting citizenship classes. However, with the exception of a pilot project in Southern California, no funds were allocated to provide the application assistance or the English and civics courses. In addition, six national testing programs were given authority to administer the English and Civics portions of the INS interview, thus reducing the workload of INS interviewers. The intended outcome of the Citizenship USA program was to keep up with the pace of applications submitted and to reduce the waiting time for application processing. The resultant peaks in applications filed and naturalizations granted are evident in Table 2.1. Naturalization numbers rose from 242,252 in Fiscal Year 1992 to a peak of 1,044,689 in 1996, temporarily declined to more typical levels, and then rose again above 800,000 in 1999. Petitions filed in a single year topped 1.4 million in 1997 before dropping off (U. S. DOJ INS 1998).

Citizenship USA was highly effective in facilitating naturalizations, but it became subject to intense scrutiny from Congressional conservatives. The INS was accused of using slipshod procedures and sacrificing thoroughness in background checks for the sake of speed. The INS admitted that a few dozen permanent residents were naturalized incorrectly, due to FBI background checks that were completed after citizenship was awarded. Perhaps more infuriating for Republicans was the defeat of incumbent congressional members in districts with large numbers of newly naturalized citizens. Accusations of voting fraud led to the speedy conclusion of Citizenship USA in 1997. Stricter FBI checks were mandated and the backlog of naturalization applications began to climb once again (Yzaguirre 1996).

Table 2.1. Naturalization applications filed, persons naturalized and persons denied naturalization (numbers in thousands), 1991-2001



Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Services, 2000; INS Monthly Statistical Report, September 2001.

The Naturalization Process

The process by which a permanent resident becomes naturalized has evolved over time, just as immigration and naturalization law has evolved. Certain elements, such as the process for FBI background checks, fingerprints, and the ever-increasing fees, are relatively new. Other elements, such as the oath of allegiance, the “moral character” requirements, and the civics questions are much older, and in many ways arcane. In the following section, the major elements of the naturalization process will be explored. Mention will be made of related legislation, when applicable.

To become a naturalized citizen of the United States, a person must meet a total of nine requirements. He or she must: (1) be a permanent resident, (2) be at least 18 years old, (3) have lived in the United States for five years, (4) have been present in the United States for at least half of the five years prior to filing the application, (5) have not abandoned residence in the United States in the five years prior, (6) demonstrate ability to communicate in the English language, (7) demonstrate knowledge of U. S. history and government, (8) demonstrate good moral character, and (9) take an oath of allegiance to the United States. In addition to fulfilling these requirements, the individual must also complete a four-step naturalization process. In this way, the applicant demonstrates to the INS that each of the requirements has been met. The process includes completing and filing the N-400 application, submitting fingerprints, being interviewed by an INS examiner, and taking the oath of allegiance.

- Application for Naturalization

The N-400 Application for Naturalization was overhauled in 2001, expanded from four to ten pages, and two additional sections were added. As stated in the “Implementation of Revised Application for Naturalization, Form N-400,” published in the Federal Register on November 16, 2001, the form was revised to reflect changes in legislation regarding disability accommodations, terrorism and persecution, deportation proceedings, and false claims to U. S. citizenship. Another impetus for revising the application was to compile information on one form (the N-400) that was previously collected in a number of naturalization forms. Major changes include the addition of information on sex, height, weight, hair color, and eye color, required for the FBI

Criminal Records search. Much more detailed information is now required in regards to marital history, travel outside the United States, criminal history, and selective service registration. As in the past, the applicant is required to list current and past residences, current and past employment, identifying information about one's self, spouse, and children, and the basis for eligibility.

The N-400 Application for Naturalization may be filed with the INS up to three months prior to the time that a resident is eligible for naturalization. In the instructions that accompany the application, eligibility requirements are listed in detail in order to deter immigrants from applying who do not qualify for naturalization. Two photographs, an application fee of \$260, a fingerprint fee of \$50, and supporting documents (when applicable) must be submitted along with the application.

Part 10 of the application is designed to ensure that the applicant is loyal to the United States, its Constitution, and system of government, has not associated with terrorist organizations (a new addition) or any other groups that could be considered anti-American, and has not done anything that would jeopardize his or her eligibility. The applicant is asked if he or she has connections to the Communist or Nazi Parties, has been confined in a mental institution, has complied with Selective Service laws, has discriminated against others, or has been arrested for any reason whatsoever. Additional questions are asked that relate to the applicants' moral character: whether the applicant has even been a "habitual drunkard," polygamist, prostitute or solicitor of prostitution, gambler, drug trafficker, or smuggler of illegal immigrants.

In the “Oath Requirements” section, the applicant is asked whether he or she believes in the Constitution, is willing to take the oath of allegiance, and is willing to defend the country in wartime. A listing of any current or former affiliations with organizations or groups within the United States or in a foreign country is also required. If the applicant answers in the affirmative to any of the questions in this section (if, for example, he or she has indeed failed to pay taxes, or has a history of prostitution), the applicant is required to provide a full explanation and to submit supporting documentation when applicable. Likewise, if the applicant answers in the negative to any of the questions in the “Oath Requirements” section (if, for example, the applicant is not willing to bear arms or will not take the Oath), the applicant is required to provide an explanation as well.

- Fingerprints and Background Check

After the N-400 application has been submitted to the INS, the agency sends a letter to the applicant with the date, time, and place that fingerprints will be taken. Most often, the fingerprinting takes place at an INS Support Center, but since there are usually only one or two of these centers per state, fingerprints are taken at police stations as well. INS sends the fingerprints to the FBI so that a criminal background check can be completed. Meanwhile, the INS locates and reviews the applicant’s immigration file along with the N-400 application. Occasionally, supporting documentation must be requested and obtained from the applicant before an interview can be scheduled.

- Interview (the Test)

“Never be late for the interview,” is always sound advice but is especially pertinent in the case of the INS interview. Applicants who arrive late or not at all can expect to have their case “administratively closed.” Reopening the case and rescheduling the interview can set back the process for several months, whereas not contacting the INS at all will lead to denial of the application. At the beginning of the interview, the INS officer explains the purpose of the naturalization interview, asks to see identification and supporting documentation, and places the applicant under oath. Lying during the interview may lead to denial of citizenship—even if the INS discovers the perjury after citizenship is granted. For the most part, the questions asked during the interview mirror those asked in the application. The interviewer asks for information regarding the applicant’s background, place of residence, work history, moral character, attachment to the Constitution, and willingness to take the oath. Questions may also be asked to affirm that the applicant is indeed eligible for naturalization. These questions are asked orally in order to verify that the application is accurate, to make any updates to application information that may have changed in the time between the submission of the application and the interview, and to verify that the applicant fully understands the questions asked in the application and can explain the answers. The INS official also uses this portion of the interview to ascertain that the applicant can speak and understand English.

Aside from communicating orally in English, the applicant must also demonstrate ability to read and write in the language. The interviewer tests reading skills by requiring the applicant to read parts of the N-400 aloud, read and then answer a list of civics questions, or read a list of sentences aloud. To test writing ability, the applicant is asked

to write one or two sentences that the interviewer will dictate. Civic knowledge may be tested via a multiple-choice exam, orally through a question and answer exchange, or as part of the reading test. The applicant is asked as few as 10 or as many as 20 questions, which will likely come from the INS *Sample Civics Questions* (a.k.a. *The 100 Questions*). However, the INS officer has discretion to ask questions that are not included in the sample.

In most cases, the applicant is informed immediately after the interview whether or not citizenship will be granted. If citizenship is to be granted, the applicant will be informed of when and where the swearing-in ceremony will take place. If the application is denied, the INS will send a written notice explaining the reason for the denial and the procedures for requesting an appeal hearing. In some cases, the INS officer will neither grant or deny citizenship, but will simply “continue the case.” Continuations most commonly occur when an applicant has failed the English or civics tests, or if all supporting documentation has not been furnished at the time of the interview. In the former case, the applicant would be allowed to interview one more time. In the latter case, appropriate documentation would need to be furnished in a specified time period.

- Swearing-In Ceremony

The Naturalization Oath Ceremony, or swearing-in ceremony, is the final step in the naturalization process. The bulk of the ceremony is devoted to checking-in and accounting for each of the applicants. The applicant is required to relinquish his or her Permanent Resident Card (green card) and answer questions to account for his or her actions since the time of the interview. An INS official then leads the applicants through

the Oath of Allegiance, archaic in its language and in the scenarios it describes, wholly unaltered since its writing in 1802 (see Appendix A for full text of the oath). If the applicant's religious beliefs forbid him or her from taking an oath or from promising to serve in the U. S. military if called to do so, certain modifications can be made to the wording. In such a case, the applicant is required to submit a letter of explanation along with supporting documentation from his or her religious organization. Only after the oath (modified or intact) has been recited, and the Certificates of Naturalization have been distributed, are the applicants finally granted citizenship.

The sense of pride that many people feel after becoming a citizen is felt most profoundly at the swearing-in-ceremony. The ceremony is an official event, but unlike previous official meetings with the INS, the mood is celebratory. When the Certificates of Naturalization are presented, it registers for the first time that the effort has been met with success, that citizenship has finally been granted. When describing the ceremony, naturalized citizens often speak of being emotionally moved and consider the event a rite of passage (Alvarez 1987; Pickus 1998).

Deciding to Naturalize

Considering the requirements for naturalization and the complexity of the process, it is not surprising that so many permanent residents choose not to naturalize. In truth, many residents are not good candidates for naturalization and should not apply. Some residents, for example, would be highly scrutinized, and would even run the risk of deportation if they did not meet all of the eligibility requirements (including the "additional eligibility requirements" in Part 7 of the application). For those residents who

are eligible, the pros and cons of retaining one's resident status must be weighed against the pros and cons of working through the naturalization process.

- Pro-Naturalization

On the "pro-naturalization" side of the equation, an individual must consider that as a citizen he or she will have the right to vote, serve on a jury, and hold elective office. Citizens also have the right to carry a U. S. passport and are not subject to certain limitations with regard to federal government jobs. Scholarship opportunities and federal student loans are also much more accessible to citizens than non-citizens. As was mentioned earlier, citizens are eligible for a wide array of social services and public assistance programs at the federal, state, and local level. Naturalized citizens are not required, as permanent residents are, to report their residence to the INS and keep a current "Alien Registration Card" with them at all times. Citizens cannot be deported for misconduct, either. In many ways, then, the transition to citizenship means that the INS no longer plays the role of Big Brother in a person's life, and a person is guaranteed the political and social rights reserved for citizens.

When persons applying for naturalization are asked why they want to become citizens, responses range from emotional attachment to financial pragmatism. Common responses include "I live here, and my children were born here"; "This is my home now"; "People have been so kind and welcoming to me"; and, "The educational and job opportunities are better here" (Alvarez 1987, p. 332). Often the three "correct" responses provided in the INS 100 Questions are cited as well. Such responses include "To bring my family members here"; "To apply for federal jobs"; and, "To travel with a U. S.

passport.” This is not to say that people do not naturalize for these reasons, but there are many other reasons for naturalizing that are not considered correct by current INS standards.

- Against Naturalization

On the other side of the equation, U. S. citizenship is not entirely free. Naturalization can be very costly in terms of time, commitment, and money, and often these drawbacks outweigh one’s desire to become a U. S. citizen. In typical circumstances, individuals applying for citizenship can expect to take time off work to travel to the INS office, endure lengthy lines for INS assistance, and wait up to a year between the time of applying and interviewing. Many eligible residents fear the citizenship exam, worrying that their English or civics knowledge is not sufficient. For residents with limited English skills, the road to naturalization can be particularly long. Reading, writing, and speaking skills must be shored up before attempting the exam. Another source of fear are accounts of unfair practices and poor treatment by INS examiners. Some of these stories are hearsay, but many others are well documented. INS examiners have a great deal of discretion in how they approach their interviewees. Some examiners have a particularly harsh manner, ask tough civics questions that are not included in the INS study guides, speak very fast, or speak in a dialect that is difficult to understand (Alvarez 1987; Grebler 1966).

The financial burden of applying for naturalization has grown three-fold in the past decade. Prior to 1999, the N-400 application fee was \$90.00. As of February 19, 2002, the total application cost has risen to \$285 (including the \$25 fingerprint fee). To

that one can expect to add a minimum of \$10 for photographs, travel costs to the INS office, fingerprinting center, and oath ceremony, and costs involved with getting release time from work. Typical fees paid to naturalization assistance centers range from \$50 to \$100, and citizenship courses can cost at least that much, unless they are offered as part of a government-funded adult basic education program. There have been numerous reports of unscrupulous lawyers and service providers who sell their naturalization “services” at high costs—information that could be acquired for little or no cost on the Internet or directly from the INS is often sold for hundreds of dollars (Alvarez 1987). Taken together, these financial costs have been shown to have a deterrent effect on naturalizations among less-affluent permanent residents (Pachon and DeSipio 1994).

Basic information about the naturalization process is not always easily accessible. Immigrants who do not live in proximity to an INS office or to naturalization assistance centers and who do not have access to the Internet may have difficulty obtaining applications and study materials. Even if one has access to self-study materials, it can be difficult to read and comprehend all of the fine print, especially for those with limited English proficiency. Many permanent residents do not naturalize because they lack adequate information about the process (Grebler 1966; Garcia 1991).

Many immigrants are not ready to absorb the psychological costs of making the transition to citizen: perhaps they have not yet decided if they want to make the United States their permanent home, or perhaps they feel as though it would be a denial of their culture and their home country to become a citizen (Pachon 1987). By taking the Oath of Allegiance, one’s nationality and allegiance to the home country are renounced. And,

unless the home country allows dual citizenship, former political and social rights in that country are sacrificed as well (Yang 1994). This can be difficult to swallow for those who travel home regularly and are still involved in the social and political life of that country. As well, refugees who left a chaotic situation in their home country often hope to return, should conditions improve. Perhaps the political upheaval in the home country will settle down, or perhaps the economy will make an upward turn and improve the standard of living. In such case, a return migration may seem like a distinct possibility. For residents who have such strong attachments to their home country and who hope to return, taking on the citizenship of another country may be psychologically burdensome.

Just as the costs of naturalization vary from person to person, the value and meaning of naturalization also varies. Whereas some consider it an honor to become an American citizen, others are ambivalent or unsure, and others may find it outright disgraceful. Much of this depends on the sense of belonging one feels “here” as opposed to “there,” as well as the quality of life “now” as opposed to “then.” Attitudes of friends and family also play a strong role in the value one places on American citizenship. Supportive attitudes of peers will often motivate a person to naturalize and facilitate the process, whereas negative attitudes will have the opposite effect (Liang 1994; Pachon 1987).

The value of citizenship is also relative in terms of other personal goals and must take its place among competing priorities. The right to vote or the honor of being a citizen means very little to someone who can’t pay the rent, is short on grocery money, or doesn’t have the insurance to cover a child’s medical expenses. For many residents,

issues such as finding adequate employment and providing for the family are real and immediate, whereas becoming a citizen may seem distant on the horizon. For reasons such as these, many permanent residents wait as long as 15 to 20 years before applying for citizenship. As time spent in the United States increases, the host country becomes more and more like home. Age and socioeconomic status often increase as well, until the costs of citizenship become manageable (Barkan and Khoklov 1980).

The policy and process of naturalization, as they stand today, are the culmination of more than two hundred years' evolution. As waves of immigrants came to the United States, immigration and naturalization laws were formed to respond to those waves. For certain groups, laws were enacted to facilitate migration and incorporation; for other groups, laws served as firm barriers. Landmark legislation such as the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 and the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 served to undo racist or exclusionary policies previously enacted. As a result, access to immigration and naturalization has widened to include persons from diverse nationalities, racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

Considering the relatively low naturalization rates of permanent residents who hail from Latin American countries or who are of low socioeconomic status, questions arise as to whether these groups are discriminated against by the process (Portes and Curtis, 1987). The government exercises its ability to exclude anyone who does not meet its eligibility factors, which include English proficiency and absence of a criminal background. However, measures have been taken in recent years to soften the English requirement for older immigrants, such as allowing persons over 50 who have been in the

United States for 20 years to use an interpreter (U. S. DOJ INS 2000). It is also somewhat difficult to pinpoint who may be discriminated against in the process, considering that naturalization is ultimately a personal choice and is not in the best interests of everyone. Easing barriers to naturalization is one thing, but encouraging residents to naturalize who are not prepared to do so is an entirely different matter.

One way to ease the barriers for those residents who meet the eligibility requirements and who have decided to apply for naturalization is through citizenship classes and other naturalization services. In the following chapter, the structure, accessibility, and content of citizenship courses will be explored in detail. This exploration will move us toward answering the question of how citizenship courses can effectively help permanent residents navigate the complexities of the naturalization process.

CHAPTER 3

PREPARATION FOR NATURALIZATION

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, immigrants arriving in the United States via Ellis Island were welcomed with a large array of organizations offering assistance. Churches, settlement houses, and charities offered a number of services to immigrants, such as re-settlement services, naturalization services, and citizenship classes (Stanfield 1991). The Ellis Island experience was not representative of most ports of entry; however, and in any case it is not the typical experience in the present day. The common scenario is that an immigrant will rely on his or her sponsor (usually a family member but oftentimes a church or non-profit organization) and the sponsor's network for assistance with housing, jobs, immigration services, and other social services. When and if a person is ready to begin the naturalization process, he or she will tap into the resources at hand by visiting a naturalization help center, attending a citizenship class, seeking legal aid, working with a tutor, or studying independently. Another naturalization resource that has become more prevalent in recent years is the social worker. Following the passage of legislation in the mid-1990s that reduced benefits to permanent residents, social workers became more involved in tutoring eligible clients and referring them to citizenship classes (Pinto 2002).

With one exception, there are no governmental or non-governmental entities currently providing comprehensive naturalization assistance on a nation-wide scale. Many immigrant service agencies, schools, and churches have responded to the needs of

immigrants in their communities by providing services, but these are usually small, independent offerings. These services are not typically linked with other immigrant services or local INS offices. The chief reasons for the limited nature of these services are (1) lack of governmental and political support, and (2) scarcity of funding.

The major exception to the rule is the work of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO). This non-profit, non-partisan organization is comprised of more than 5,000 Latino officials in the United States. One of the goals of NALEO is to promote the integration of Latinos into American society and one of the ways NALEO pursues that goal is by helping Latino permanent residents to become U. S. citizens. For nearly two decades, NALEO has hosted community workshops in citizenship preparation that have helped more than 85,000 immigrants become citizens. In addition, the NALEO toll-free citizenship hotline has handled over half a million calls since the mid-1980s, providing callers with basic information about naturalization. Whereas the community workshops have primarily served Latino groups, the telephone hotline has reached a much broader immigrant base. NALEO reports that immigrants of 85 different national-origin groups have consulted the hotline (Gonzalez 2001).

The Americanization movement in the 1920s included the most comprehensive naturalization drive in our nation's history. Citizenship courses were offered by private organizations and by federal, state, and local government entities in virtually every city, town or village where immigrants resided. Courses were accessible, free-of-charge, and much more rigorous than those offered today. A typical course would meet nearly every day for seven months. Those who look upon Americanization with nostalgia—and

indeed, their numbers are waning—would argue that the citizenship classes were not just about rigorously imparting information about English and U. S. History, but about reaching out to excluded groups and forming common bonds. It could be argued that immigrants were educated in citizenship for the sake of such noble principles as inclusiveness and egalitarianism.

The coercive aspect of the Americanization effort has overshadowed its inclusive spirit, however. From the immigrant's view, it is unlikely that one felt a strong sense of community when being coerced into taking daily citizenship classes. Furthermore, the common life that the Americanizers tried to share with immigrants in these classes included moral virtues, self-control, and personal hygiene. The message that came across was that immigrants' cultural heritages and primary languages were somehow inferior, and should be cast off in favor of dominant cultural norms. Instead of making immigrants feel welcome, the citizenship classes and other Americanization efforts had the opposite effect of alienating newcomers. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, naturalization rates actually declined at the time of the Americanization movement.

IRCA Wave of Civics Courses

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 mandated that immigrants applying for legalization must submit an application to the INS in a limited window of time and pass a U. S. History and Civics exam. In order to process the requisite number of applications, the agency reached out to immigrants and assisted them in applying for legalization and passing the exam. INS offices appealed to immigrants directly through mailings and media campaigns. In addition, district directors met with immigration

service agencies and adult basic education providers to ensure that civics classes would be offered and to offer guidance regarding the curriculum. Approximately three million undocumented immigrants took the 40-hour American history and civics courses required for legalization (Pickus 1998; Smith and Edmonston 1997).

Rand Corporation/Urban Institute's Program for Research on Immigration Policy found that IRCA legislation of 1986 had a marginal but positive impact on the ability of the INS to provide immigrant services. Juffras (1991) argued that the INS does not typically promote naturalization because they have not been directed to do so by Congress. Very few legislative proposals have been targeted at reaching out to immigrants or providing assistance with citizenship, beyond the basics of processing forms and scheduling interviews. Proposals that have emerged have been ill supported, because of the limited political power of immigrants and immigrant groups. Typically, improvements or expansions in INS services have come about as a side effect of other measures, not as an end in themselves.

The INS changed its stance on the promotion of naturalization in the mid-1990s. Whereas in the 1980s and early 1990s, the agency attributed its lack of naturalization outreach to its non-coercion policy, Doris Meissner, INS Director under the Clinton Administration, argued that naturalization can indeed be promoted without coercion by simply informing immigrants about their eligibility and educating them on the various naturalization requirements. This stance was demonstrated in the adoption of the Citizenship USA program.

Pachon and DeSipio (1992) offer a political solution for the lack of governmental support and funding for naturalization assistance. They call on Latino leaders, such as those involved in NALEO to look beyond the “do-it-yourself” approach and to demand that the federal government promote and support the naturalization effort. This would be an instrumental step in overcoming the exclusion of Latinos and engaging them in the political process. Another essential step toward this goal would be to more effectively mobilize Latino voters. Electoral participation of Latinos lags behind the national average, which also hinders the political power of this group.

Exploration of Citizenship Programs and Classes

Citizenship classes are offered in a variety of venues, by a variety of organizations and the structure of the classes varies widely as well. Immigrant assistance centers often hold month-long or 6-week “crash courses” in U.S. civics and history. Typically, such courses are targeted at immigrants with some level of literacy in English. For those whose literacy skills are lower, semester or yearlong courses that combine civics with English language learning are of greater benefit. Tuition for such courses typically ranges between \$100-\$300 (Cook 2000).

In cities with large immigrant populations, such as Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Miami, the demand for citizenship classes is such that the classes are very visible, well-advertised, and relatively expensive (compared to classes held in areas with less demand). In an ethnographic study of Latinos in Chicago, Alvarez (1987) found the majority of naturalized citizens interviewed had either taken citizenship courses or sought out another form of naturalization assistance, such as legal help or assistance with the

application. The majority of those interviewed had learned about naturalization requirements through radio and television announcements. Such announcements served an education purpose and, at the same time, promoted the services of naturalization assistance centers. Similar announcements are also commonplace in Los Angeles and have influenced relatively high rates of naturalization in that city.

Many citizenship classes, especially those held in public schools or churches, are offered free-of-charge. NALEO offers citizenship workshops free-of-charge as well, often in conjunction with other community service agencies. Because of the nature of the service and the desire to be accessible to immigrants with low incomes, many organizations are hesitant to attach a user fee. The naturalization application fee of \$310 is considered high enough, and other charges associated with the process would seem to create more barriers for low-income applicants. In order to manage costs, coordinators and teachers of free classes must be enlisted as volunteers or paid through donations or grant funding. Costs associated with instructional materials and classroom facilities are often absorbed by the overall institution or through special donations. The difficulties of facilitating classes on a slim-to-nonexistent budget can certainly strain the resources of churches and non-profit organizations, especially where the demand for naturalization assistance is high.

Reliance on churches for citizenship instruction has drawbacks for immigrants. While the immigrant population in a given locality may have dozens of different religious affiliations, churches that offer such instruction will likely represent one or a few denominations. This is most readily observable among the Latinos, the majority of who

have been traditionally Catholic but who are now affiliating with a greater variety of denominations. Particularly notable is the fact that the fastest-growing religious affiliation among Latinos is Evangelical Christian. Citizenship instructors who offer classes in church settings have noted that non-Catholic Latinos are reluctant to attend classes in Catholic churches, and non-Evangelical Latinos are reluctant to attend classes in Evangelical churches. One of the main advantages to holding classes in a religious institution is that the setting is accessible to people in the community who belong to the church, or who are of the same religious affiliation. Those who do not share the religious affiliation, however, may be reluctant to attend a class in the church.

In recent years, citizenship instruction has found a more stable home in the adult basic education (ABE) classroom. ABE is a local, state and national program that provides free literacy and basic skills instruction for adult learners. General Education Development (GED) courses are offered for those who have not graduated from high school. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are offered for non-native English speakers. It is within this last component that citizenship instruction is often integrated. English literacy instruction is combined with U. S. History and government instruction to provide the learner with all of the skills necessary to become naturalized citizens. From a practical standpoint, combining English and citizenship into one class can be an effective way of managing very scarce resources.

In the following section, the basic curriculum of citizenship courses will be explored. This will be achieved by giving an overview of citizenship textbooks currently in print. Because the main objective of citizenship courses is to prepare immigrants to

successfully complete the naturalization process, a large component of the curriculum relates to INS policies, procedures, and requirements. U. S. Civics instruction is naturally a key part of curricula, as are English literacy and communication skills. Along with describing the components of the course, I will attempt to gauge the relative importance of each component in six textbooks.

A search was performed on the amazon.com website for “United States Citizenship” under the site’s “Reference Books” category. A total of twelve in-print textbooks were found on this subject. A search was then undertaken in libraries and bookstores in the Omaha area for those twelve textbooks. Six of the twelve books (50 percent) were located and each of the six was reviewed for this study. A list of the reviewed textbooks follows:

- *Citizenship Now* (Becker and Edwards 1995)
- *Citizenship: Passing the Test* (Weintraub 1998)
- *How to Become a United States Citizen* (Schreuder 1995)
- *How to Prepare for the U. S. Citizenship Test* (Alesi 2000)
- *Pass the U. S. Citizenship Exam* (Masi 1999)
- *Twenty-Five Lessons in Citizenship* (Hennessey 1997)

Three key content areas emerged in the six textbooks that seem to characterize citizenship courses: (1) teaching of U. S. civics, (2) teaching of English literacy, and (3) teaching of the naturalization process and procedures. The first two content areas involve improving skills and imparting knowledge, whereas the third involves practical methods for working with the INS. Following is a more detailed exploration into these three areas, as well as areas that appear less-frequently in citizenship texts.

Teaching Civics

The six citizenship textbooks reviewed seem to fall under two classifications: those written by English as a Second Language or Citizenship teachers and those written in cooperation with an immigrant service agency. The portion of the texts devoted to civics lessons varies depending on which classification the textbook falls under. For example, *Citizenship Now*, written in cooperation with the Travelers and Immigrants Aid of Chicago (Becker and Edwards 1995), *How to Prepare for the U. S. Citizenship Test* (Alesi 2000), written by the director of the American Immigration and Citizenship Conference, and *Pass the U. S. Citizenship Exam* (Masi 1999), adapted from a study guide from the Catholic Charities Immigration and Refugee Services, give equal weight to civics instruction and other topics. On the other hand, the independently published *Twenty-Five Lessons in Citizenship* (Hennessey 1997), *Citizenship: Passing the Test* (Weintraub 1998), and *How to Become a United States Citizen* (Schreuder 1995) are written by former civics and ESL instructors and are almost wholly comprised of civics lessons.

The texts written by Becker and Edwards (1995) and Alesi (2000) are distinct in that they not only cover the content of the INS list of 100 questions, but also present a thorough conceptualization of citizenship. For example, Becker and Edwards devote a chapter to civic involvement and another to state and local government. Neither of these chapters will help the student memorize the 100 questions, but they do explain the democratic process at the local, state, and federal level. The chapter on state and local government helps students to see how political decisions made at the local level (e.g.,

zoning laws, provision of library and recreation services, funding allocations to public schools and waste disposal) affect our day-to-day lives. Furthermore, it becomes apparent how important it is for citizens to affect local government through choosing leaders and informing the decision-making process. Non-electoral forms of political participation, such as signing petitions and attending rallies, are described along with electoral participation (e.g., voting and holding office). In the chapters that cover information from the 100 Questions, Becker and Edwards also explain issues and legislation that have bearing on the lives and destinies of immigrants in particular. For example, in the chapter on the legislative branch of government, the authors explain the main provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. In another chapter, the stances of the two major political parties on issues affecting immigrants and immigration are discussed.

Similar to Becker and Edwards (1995), Alesi (2000) explains the rights and duties of citizens, as well as the role of the citizen in the democratic process. Visual aids are presented to explain concepts such as federalism, checks and balances, the process by which a bill becomes law, and how the timeline of United States history compares to the timeline of world history. One of the most significant U. S. history lessons presented is that ours is a nation of immigrants—founded by immigrants and populated by immigrants. Throughout history, immigrants have shaped the political, social, cultural and economic life of the country. This is especially salient considering the changing ethnic make-up of our country, and the fact that the immigrants of today, along with their children, will be our future leaders.

- A Note on the Content of the 100 Questions

As mentioned in a previous chapter, an integral part of the INS interview is to test civic knowledge with the “INS List of 100 Questions.” Each of the textbooks reviewed here pays specific attention to this list of questions. However, contention has arisen around the questions that the INS has chosen as its guide for testing civic knowledge. The questions can be described as arbitrary, trivial, repetitive, subjective and overly simplistic. Trivial questions include “What are the 49th and 50th states of the union?” The questions “Who helped the Pilgrims in America?” and “Who discovered America?” could be classified as subjective or overly simplistic. Repetitive questions are also common: “What is Independence Day?” is followed by “What is the Fourth of July?” Likewise, “From whom did we gain independence?” is followed by “What country did we fight during the Revolutionary War?” There is very little room for variation in the answers, which means that test-takers must memorize questions and answers verbatim without bringing in their own analysis. For example, the three answers to “Name one benefit of becoming a citizen,” are “Obtain Federal Government jobs,” “Travel with a U. S. passport,” and “Petition for close relatives to come to the U. S. to live.”

Pickus (1998) traced the development of the INS 100 questions and found that the method for choosing the questions was as random and arbitrary as the questions themselves. In the late 1980s, two INS officers wrote the questions to provide guidance to private companies offering IRCA citizenship classes (for immigrants who were going through the legalization process). Although the questions were never meant to be used as a measure of qualifications for naturalization, INS directors began telling their examiners

to use the list as a way to standardize the citizenship interview. As Pickus relates it, “The citizenship test is largely shaped by material developed for illegal immigrants by two INS folks practically over the course of a weekend.” As a result, teachers of citizenship courses and the writers of textbooks must balance the desire to present accurate information with the desire to “teach to the test.” Unfortunately, the more significant aspects of citizenship--such as understanding of the democratic process, the importance of rule of law and the processes by which citizens and leaders can affect change—are not included in the 100 questions are therefore often overlooked in citizenship curricula.

As part of the restructuring of the INS, plans are currently in place to redesign the citizenship exam. The INS has actually planned to redesign the exam for more than a decade, but those plans have been overshadowed by more pressing concerns, such as backlogs, automation of processing procedures, centralization of records, the Citizenship USA program, the advent of privatized citizenship exams, and the termination of privatized citizenship exams. The new test is expected to be standardized for all districts and will be administered in a written form, rather than orally. The actual content of the new test is yet to be established, although many academics and immigration advocates have voiced their suggestions. Recommended questions include “Name one difference between the Republican and Democratic parties,” and “What did President Kennedy mean when he said, ‘Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country’” (Aizenman 1998)? If the new test reflects some of the suggestions being given (in spirit if not in actual content), it is likely that the citizenship test will test for understanding of the democratic process, civil rights and civic duty.


Teaching the Language

Of the six textbooks reviewed, five of them are aimed at the student who is developing proficiency in English, rather than the student who is already fluent. The Hennessey (1997) text is the exception; Hennessey uses archaic language, very small font (8 and 10 point) and does not provide vocabulary lists or other clues to deciphering the English language. The other texts are less demanding from a literacy standpoint. Four of them, Becker and Edwards (1995), Alesi (2000), Masi (1999), and Weintraub (1998), provide students with exercises for reading, writing, and speaking English. Schreuder (1995) does not include English instructional exercises, but does provide Spanish translations to each of the passages.

The most thorough instruction in English literacy is provided by Becker and Edwards (1995). Each chapter in *Citizenship Now* includes English listening and writing practice, wherein the student is directed to transcribe sentences from an audiotape and provide written answers to history and civics questions. The purpose of the sentence dictation is to prepare students for the English writing portion of the INS interview, in which the INS officer reads one or two sentences and instructs the student to transcribe what is said. English grammar and usage exercises, similar to exercises that would be found in a low-level ESL curriculum, are also provided in each chapter. These exercises include verb usage (present, future, and past-tense verb constructions, helping verbs, subject-verb agreement), information questions and tag questions.

Alesi (2000) provides structured lessons in the English language but places more emphasis on writing practice than do Becker and Edwards. The Alesi text is the only one

that requires students to answer open-ended questions on civics and history and is the only one besides the Becker and Edwards text to include quizzes on English vocabulary. Students are also required to interpret reading passages and summarize historical documents, such as the Bill of Rights, in their own words. Such exercises are more challenging than those found in most citizenship texts.

Masi (1998) and Weintraub (1998) provide ESL instruction at a much lower grade-level. The Weintraub book is at the lowest reading-level: the typical page of reading includes one illustration, three short sentences, two vocabulary words and one spelling word. Often, a vocabulary word will be followed by an illustration instead of a definition (e.g., “king  ”). The Weintraub text is at a slightly higher reading-level than the Masi text, providing more thorough summaries of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence. However, all of the question and answer exercises are multiple-choice, similar to the Masi text. The only English writing practice in the text is the transcription of simple sentences such as “I like snow,” and “I go to school.” The sentences chosen are curious, considering that the INS sample sentences involve more complex vocabulary. Examples of the *INS Sample Sentences for Written English Testing* include “The Constitution is the supreme law of the land,” and “Our Government is divided into three branches.” (A complete listing of the INS Sample Sentences is provided in Appendix B.)

Teaching the Process

Three of the six citizenship textbooks offered at least a cursory explanation of the naturalization process. Alesi (2000) devotes the most actual pages to instruction in the

“steps to citizenship,” with 45 pages or roughly one-fourth of the text. Alesi provides sample forms, describes typical INS interview scenarios, and offers “probability questions” (those questions which are asked most often at the INS interview). Becker and Edwards (1995) devote less space to teaching the naturalization process but are actually more comprehensive in their instruction than is Alesi. The first chapter in the Becker and Edwards text explains the process of naturalization and typical scenarios. In Chapters 2 through 11, sample dialogues of INS interviews are provided so that students can practice interviewing skills. Along with the interview dialogues are segments from the N-400 application with explanations of virtually every line so that students not only learn how to fill out the application correctly, but learn the meaning of the questions, some of which are rather cryptically worded. Future editions of these texts should include updated application information to reflect the adoption of the extended application format.

Masi (1999) also provided an explanation of the naturalization process in *Pass the United States Citizenship Exam*. The treatment given to this area was not as comprehensive as in the two texts mentioned above, but this is likely because the Masi text is at a lower reading level. This text is characterized by simple, concise statements, large-print, and a “just the facts” approach. Concise explanations are given regarding eligibility factors, the application process, the fingerprinting process, the citizenship interview, and the swearing-in ceremony. Naturalization resources are also described, including the locations of the INS service centers and a contact for legal aid referrals. To the credit of the author, the chapter that explains the process of becoming a citizen is

prefaced by an analysis of the reasons to become a citizen and the reasons not to become a citizen. Therefore, if a student places value on his or her current citizenship (i.e. if he or she wishes to vote or own property in the home country, or to return permanently) the suggestion is made to explore dual citizenship. This factor, the recognition that naturalization involves costs as well as benefits, was missing from the other five textbooks.

The six textbooks reviewed here varied widely in the extent to which they covered the three main topic areas—civics instruction, English literacy instruction, and explanation of the naturalization process. The Alesi and Becker/Edwards texts covered each of the three main areas rather comprehensively, while the Masi text included most of the components at a more basic reading level. The Hennessey, Schreuder, and Weintraub texts were more limited in scope, although the Weintraub text would be accessible to students with very limited English proficiency. The Schreuder text would be advantageous for students who are literate in Spanish, however. A summary of the characteristics of each of the six reviewed textbooks is illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Summary of topics covered in citizenship textbooks

	Alesi	Becker/ Edwards	Hennessey	Masi	Schreuder	Weintraub
Instruction in civics and history sufficient to answer INS 100-questions	√	√	√	√	√	√
Instruction in civics which includes democratic process and political participation	√	√				
Instruction in English literacy	√	√		√		√
English writing practice	√	√		*		*
English grammar/usage	√	√		*		*
Instruction in naturalization process (general)	√	√		√		
Explanation of the N-400 application	√	√				
INS interview practice	√	√		√		
Spanish translation				*	√	
Recognition of costs and benefits of naturalization				√		

√ = Element is present in textbook

* = Element is present to a limited degree

In the following chapter, the citizenship classes offered in Omaha, Nebraska, will be observed and evaluated. The information in the current chapter provides a framework for discussing the topics likely to be covered in those classes. Assuming that course materials indicate the topics covered in a given course, it is important that the textbooks used in each of the classes offered in Omaha have been reviewed here. Specifically, the

Alesi (2000) or Becker and Edwards (1995) textbooks are used in each of the classes.

Therefore, we would expect that if each class follows the texts, those classes would include instruction in civics, English literacy, and the naturalization process. Beyond the presence or absence of the three main topic areas, it will be salient to observe in these classes (1) the manner in which citizenship is conceptualized in the lessons, (2) the extent to which English communication is emphasized, and (3) the techniques by which the naturalization process is taught, such as N-400 application and interview practice.

CHAPTER 4

ACCESSIBILITY AND RELEVANCE OF CITIZENSHIP CLASSES

The fields of political science and public administration are rich with studies of public policies and publicly funded programs. It is less common in these fields to find an evaluation of a program in the non-profit sector. Even though most non-profits and educational institutions receive some amount of public funding, they are not direct appendages of the executive branch of government and are therefore somewhat sheltered from the attention of policy scholars. In this study, however, it is not possible to avoid an analysis of the naturalization services provided by non-governmental organizations. This is because the services provided by the government in this arena are focused more on application processing and less on education and support. For this reason, citizenship classes offered by educational institutions and non-profits are given close attention. By studying these classes, and by identifying exemplary practices within these classes, it will be possible to make recommendations related to the role of the government in providing naturalization assistance.

In the previous chapter, various forms of naturalization assistance were described, based on information available in the literature. Citizenship courses were analyzed somewhat indirectly through reviewing and evaluating a sample of citizenship textbooks. It was found that all of the reviewed texts included instruction in civics and history, and a few included comprehensive explanations of the naturalization process, application and interview guidance, and rigorous English language instruction.

The current chapter is also devoted to citizenship classes, but here begins the original research component of the study. Instead of reviewing articles and congressional testimony on this subject, I will present findings of interviews with citizenship instructors and observations of citizenship classes. I will analyze the promotional materials, textbooks, and other instructional materials used in the advertising and teaching of these classes. The questions answered through this research are (1) “How accessible are citizenship courses to those in need of naturalization assistance?” and (2) “How closely are the curricula of citizenship courses related to the skills and knowledge needed to complete the naturalization process?”

The theoretical population is defined as the citizenship classes offered to the public in Omaha, Nebraska. Omaha was chosen primarily because of its familiarity and accessibility to the author, but also because of characteristics that make it relevant to the research questions. Omaha has a growing immigrant population, comprised primarily of Latinos. Between 1990 and 2000, the U. S. Census count of persons of Hispanic origin grew 274% from 10,288 to 28,214 persons. During the same time period, the census count of Omaha’s foreign-born population grew 277%, from 9,402 to 26,082 persons (Census 1990 Summary File 3; Census 2000 Supplementary Survey). There is evidence, however, that the magnitude of the population increase is actually overstated because the 1990 baseline for the Hispanic population was undercounted. New methods for identifying ethnicity and national origin in Census 2000 vis-a-vis Census 1990 explains a portion of the increase.

As Omaha's foreign-born population has expanded in the past 10 years, immigrant services have also expanded. Unfortunately, such services have been limited by an absence of coordination. Furthermore, naturalization assistance as a subset of immigrant services has been extremely limited; political parties or political organizations such as NALEO have not been involved in offering such services here, and non-profit organizations have just recently taken up the cause.

Omaha's Chicano Awareness Center (CAC) is the process of planning an adult education programs that would include citizenship classes as well as English as a Second Language and basic skills courses. The involvement of non-profit organizations such as CAC in the promotion of naturalization is a positive step towards greater political involvement of foreign-born residents in Omaha. The research findings presented in this chapter will present the current situation in Omaha with regards to naturalization assistance and suggest new directions for expanded services in the public and non-profit sectors.

Research Methodology

The accessibility of citizenship classes in Omaha and the relevance of those classes are two distinct issues. The accessibility question is explored in terms of location, visibility, and the presence or absence of barriers that would inhibit immigrants from attending citizenship courses. The relevance of the classes is determined by measuring the extent to which the content of the classes reflects the competencies needed to successfully complete the naturalization process.

The location of citizenship classes is evaluated to determine to what extent the physical locations of the classes are in proximity to those neighborhoods in Omaha where large numbers of non-citizens reside. The locations of the classes was determined by reviewing the addresses listed on promotional materials and by contacting the providers of those classes to ascertain that the addresses are current and accurate. The distribution and concentration of Omaha's non-citizen population was determined by analyzing Census 2000 Public Use Micro Sample data (PUMS) at the tract and block levels. To aid the analysis, a map was generated that displays the geographical distribution of Omaha's non-citizen residents as well as the distribution of citizenship classes in Omaha. In order to conclude that the classes are accessible, the locations of those classes need to coincide to some extent with the areas having high-concentrations of non-citizens. Because Omaha's foreign-born population is becoming increasingly dispersed (for example, Latinos who have traditionally inhabited Southeast Omaha are becoming more dispersed through the northern and western quadrants of the city) it would be ideal if the classes were dispersed in a similar pattern.

Visibility of classes is more difficult to measure than location. Perhaps the most direct way to measure visibility would be to survey the target population of the classes to determine to what extent they are aware of classes being offered. Unfortunately, such a survey cannot be included in this study for practical reasons. To measure visibility in an indirect manner, I made telephone calls to Omaha-area immigrant service agencies to inquire about (1) the availability and the nature of naturalization services provided through the agency, (2) other naturalization services offered in the Omaha area. I also

inquired about the referrals given out by each agency. In other words, when someone walks in or calls the office to ask for help with naturalization, which agencies and/or citizenship classes are they most often referred to?

Another method for measuring visibility is the review of advertising media. Through discussions with immigrant service agencies and citizenship class providers, I compiled a list of promotional materials distributed, the frequency and size of distribution, and the final destination of those materials, i.e., the persons or organizations that receive them. I also reviewed advertising disseminated through television and radio broadcasts.

In the Chapter 3 literature review, it was noted that the place and structure of citizenship classes could create barriers for immigrants. For example, if tuition is charged for a class, the class may not be accessible for immigrants with low incomes. The curriculum and instructional methods can create barriers as well, if the instruction is too easy or difficult, or if a language or dialect is used that is difficult to comprehend. The location where the class is taught may constitute a barrier; for instance, potential students may feel uncomfortable attending class in an unfamiliar part of town. It is impossible to conceive of a class that does not present a barrier for some immigrants, considering that immigrants who are in need of naturalization assistance speak many different languages, hail from many countries, and have diverse social, educational and economic backgrounds. I did not judge these classes with the expectation that they provide all things to all people, but I did examine four characteristics of these classes--

cost, location, and language(s) used in instruction--to determine if these factors present significant barriers to persons in need of assistance.

Once the accessibility of Omaha's citizenship classes has been discussed, I will approach the second major research question of this study: How closely are the curricula of citizenship courses related to the skills and knowledge needed to complete the naturalization process? There are three research methods to be used in answering this question. Firstly, interviews were conducted with teachers and coordinators of the classes to determine the content of each class. I was looking specifically for the presence of core content areas that have been shown to be helpful to students who are navigating the naturalization process, i.e. U.S. civics and history instruction, English literacy instruction and instruction in the naturalization process, including completing the N-400 application and preparing for the INS interview. Secondly, I performed a content analysis on textbooks, handouts, and other instructional materials to determine to what extent the three content areas are covered, and whether additional content areas are included in the instructional materials that were not mentioned in the interviews. Finally, I visited five of these classes to observe how the teachers conduct the classes and which content areas are given precedence.¹ By speaking with teachers, reviewing the texts, and observing classes, I am able to determine which content areas are covered in the classes and to what extent those content areas are covered. This information allows me to

¹ The five classes visited included three Omaha Public Schools classes: one at the OPS Career Center, one at Greater Omaha Packing, and one at Nebraska Health Systems. I was referred to these three classes by the coordinator of the OPS ABE/GED department. Classes held at Saint Agnes Church at Metropolitan Community College were also visited.

answer the broader question of how closely these classes are related to the skills and knowledge immigrants need to successfully naturalize.

Findings

To measure the accessibility of the classes, the first component that was explored was their physical location. By reviewing the materials promoting the classes and speaking with the coordinators and teachers of each of the classes, I compiled an address list that includes all of the publicly available classes currently offered in Omaha, Nebraska. Utilizing ArcInfo mapping software, those addresses were plotted on an electronic map of Douglas County, Nebraska (of which Omaha is a part) published by the U. S. Census Bureau. Also included on the map is the geographical distribution of Douglas County's non-citizen residents, as presented in the Census Summary File 3 data for 1990. Unfortunately, it was not possible to use Census 2000 data in the analysis, as summary data was not yet available at the small area (census tract or census block) level at the time of this writing. Following is a list of names and locations of citizenship classes in Omaha, Nebraska, as of April 2002.

1. Omaha Public Schools ESL/Citizenship classes
 - Burke High School, 12200 Burke Boulevard
 - Career Center, 3230 Burt Street
 - Castelar School, 2316 South 18th Street
 - Greater Omaha Packing, 3001 L Street
 - Indian Hill School, 3121 U Street
 - Marrs Academy, 5619 South 19th Street
 - Nebraska Health Systems, 42nd and Farnam Streets
 - Our Lady of Guadalupe, 2310 O Street
 - Pella Lutheran Church, 303 South 41st Street
 - St. Michael Catholic Church, 13232 Blondo Street
 - South High School, 4519 South 24th Street

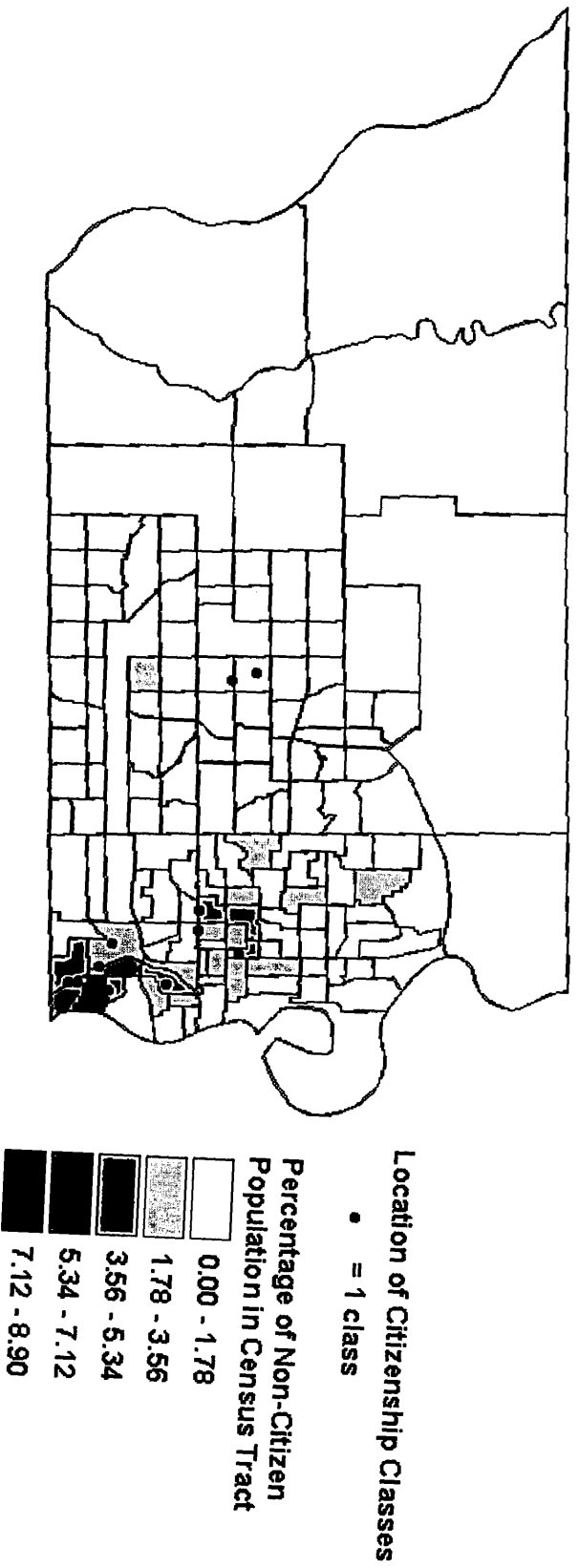
2. Metropolitan Community College U. S. Citizenship Preparation course
 - 2909 Babe Gomez Road
3. Mammal Foundation/St. Agnes Church Citizenship class
 - 2215 Q Street

As Map 4.1 illustrates, nearly all of the citizenship classes in Omaha are offered in neighborhoods with high concentrations of non-citizens. Southeast Omaha has the highest concentration of non-citizens, the majority of whom are Latino, and also has the highest concentration of citizenship classes. Eight of the 13 citizenship classes (61.5%) are held in that area. The second highest concentration of non-citizens lives in the East-Central area of the city and is clustered around 42nd and Dodge Streets. Three classes of the thirteen (23.0%) are held in that area. Two classes, the Burke High and St. Michael classes facilitated by Omaha Public Schools, are located in West Omaha, a region with a much sparser population of non-citizens. According to Amy Tenning, the coordinator of ABE/GED at OPS, these two classes balance the heavy concentration of offerings in East Omaha. The northeast quadrant of the city, north of Dodge Street and east of 72nd appears to be somewhat underserved. Several clusters of non-citizens live in this area and there is evidence that many immigrants who lived in the southeast quadrant in 1990 have now migrated to the northeast quadrant. Census 2000 summary data would depict this pattern more vividly.

Visibility of Citizenship Classes

The visibility of citizenship classes in Omaha was measured through phone calls to immigrant service agencies and by reviewing advertisements used to promote the classes. Over a two-week period, calls were made to a total of 15 churches, service

Map 4.1. Distribution of non-citizen population and citizenship classes in Douglas County, Nebraska



SOURCE: United States Bureau of the Census, 1990 Summary Data File 3

agencies, and educational institutions, all of which provide social and educational services to immigrant populations. A contact person at each agency or institution was asked if the agency provides citizenship classes or other naturalization services and/or if the agency referred clients to other agencies or schools for naturalization assistance. If referrals were made, I asked for names of organizations to which clients had been referred.

Three of the organizations contacted indicated that they offered citizenship classes: Omaha Public Schools, Metropolitan Community College, and Saint Agnes Church. Five additional organizations--Family Service, Social Settlement, Juan Diego Center, Chicano Awareness Center, and the Iowa-Nebraska Immigrant Rights Network--indicated that they provided other naturalization services, such as advice, application assistance, and study materials for the citizenship exam. All 15 of the organizations indicated that they had referred clients to one or more citizenship classes. Thirteen of them (86.7%) referred clients to the Saint Agnes Church citizenship class, 8 (53.3%) referred clients to the Omaha Public Schools ESL/Citizenship class, and 6 (40%) referred clients to the Metropolitan Community College citizenship class. In addition, 9 (60%) of the 15 organizations referred clients to a legal clinic, and 7 (46.7%) referred clients to the Family Service agency for general assistance.

For another measure of the visibility of citizenship classes, advertising materials were collected from each of the three organizations providing classes. As I gathered the materials, I inquired about the size of the distribution, the frequency of distribution, and the targeted audience for the advertising. A contact at Omaha Public Schools indicated

that the ESL/citizenship classes were promoted through print and television advertising. She provided me with two flyers that listed locations and times for 11 classes. These were distributed to the central offices of each of the schools in the OPS system as well as social service agencies in the Omaha area.

The St. Agnes citizenship class had the best visibility in terms of agency referrals (13 of 15 agencies contacted indicated that they referred clients to Saint Agnes), but used the least advertising of the three organizations. The coordinator of the class, Gail Reyes, maintained that the best advertising for this type of service is “word-of-mouth.” She provided evidence of this with a colorful brochure that had been professionally produced to advertise the class and had been distributed to dozens of area businesses and non-profit agencies. The brochure listed benefits of U. S. citizenship, the topics to be covered in the 8-week class, and also included a postcard that could be returned to Ms. Reyes to request additional information. In a year’s time, only two of the postcards accompanying the brochures had been completed and sent in. When Ms. Reyes asked new students where they had learned about the class, the most typical response was “word-of-mouth,” e.g., referrals by friends, family members, and co-workers.

Metropolitan Community College had the fewest referrals but the greatest diversity in terms of modes of advertising. Metro citizenship classes were advertised on public access television, a Latino radio program, a Latino newspaper, and through flyers and brochures mailed to social service agencies and businesses. Information packets that included an explanatory letter and several brochures were sent to Human Resources departments of area businesses that employed large numbers of immigrants. As diverse

as the advertising was, however, it was also sporadic. The radio and television spots were aired only at the time of the citizenship program's inception in 1999. Since then, print advertising has been distributed at 6-12 month intervals.

Potential Barriers

Besides location, the factors that were identified as potentially impeding a student from attending a citizenship class were the cost of the class, the location, and the exclusive use of English instruction. Two of the three citizenship programs, the Saint Agnes class and the Omaha Public Schools classes, are offered free-of-charge. The Saint Agnes class is able to cover costs with a grant from the Mammal Family Foundation grant, and the OPS classes are funded through the school system's Adult Basic Education department. The Metro class, on the other hand, has a tuition cost of \$25.00 and a book and materials cost of \$10.00. While the total cost is rather minimal, breaking down to about \$1.00 per contact hour, this clearly detracts from the marketability of the class. Prospective students for the class are arguably unaccustomed to paying tuition for education, since ESL and Adult Basic Education classes in the community are all offered free-of-charge, including those offered at Metro. In this context, charging tuition for a citizenship class constitutes a barrier, regardless of how minimal the cost.

Exclusive use of the English language can constitute another barrier for citizenship students. Although English language instruction is one of the most important components of the citizenship curriculum, a class taught solely in English can be inaccessible to students with limited understanding of the language. The instructors who teach the Saint Agnes class seem to have been most responsive to this fact, and have used

a great deal of bilingual instruction in the class. Lessons are taught primarily in English and are then summarized in Spanish to aid comprehension. Spanish is also used in one-on-one tutorial assistance. Interview practice, however, is conducted solely in English, to provide students with an experience that mirrors the INS interview experience as closely as possible.

The OPS classes also use bilingual instruction, but not as consistently as in the St. Agnes classes. Just as the students vary in their understanding of English, the OPS teachers and volunteers vary as much in their understanding of Spanish. As a result, some OPS citizenship classes employ a higher degree of bilingual instruction than others. The Metro class uses yet another approach: the class is taught in English, but volunteers and bilingual students are called upon to provide interpretations. Since the Metro class has been much more diverse in terms of students' ethnic backgrounds, English-Spanish instruction would be less appropriate than in the St. Agnes and OPS classes, which are populated overwhelmingly with Latino students. Although instructors and volunteers have worked together to overcome the language barriers in each of the three classes, the St. Agnes class seems to be most successful in this realm, with the benefit of teachers and volunteers fluent in both English and Spanish and an almost 100% Latino student population.

Another factor which may constitute a barrier for citizenship students is the setting in which the class is taught. As was mentioned previously, classes taught in church settings are sometimes avoided by students of other faiths. This factor was brought up by two of the social service providers who made referrals to the St. Agnes

class. According to the service providers, non-Catholic immigrants were sometimes hesitant to attend that particular class because of the setting. This would likely apply to the OPS classes, since three of the ten classes are offered in churches. However, in this case, there are many more offerings to choose from. Setting has also been an issue for the Metro class, but for another reason. The same service providers who reported that non-Catholic immigrants were hesitant to attend the Saint Agnes class also reported that the Metro class intimidated some immigrants because it is held in a college setting. According to one service provider, immigrants with higher education levels tended to prefer the Metro class, whereas immigrants with lower education levels and less command of the English language tended to gravitate towards the St. Agnes class.

Relevance of Citizenship Classes

In gauging the relevance of the three citizenship programs, three methods were employed: reviews of texts and instructional materials, classroom observations, and interviews with teachers and coordinators. The first step in researching the content of Omaha's three citizenship programs was to contact the teachers and coordinators of each of the courses directly. Interviews and classroom observations were held over the two-month period of February-March 2002. Initial interviews with the coordinators of the St. Agnes and the Omaha Public Schools courses were held over the phone. Follow-up interviews with those coordinators, as well as three instructors (one from the St. Agnes course and two from the OPS course) were held in the classroom, before and after classes were in session. An interview with the coordinator of the Metro class was also held in-person.

Teachers and coordinators of the classes provided information related to the structure of the course, the texts and materials used, and the actual content of the course. All three citizenship programs currently use textbooks that were reviewed in the preceding chapter. The St. Agnes and Metro programs use the *Citizenship Now* (Becker and Edwards, 1995), while the Omaha Public Schools program uses *How to Prepare for the U. S. Citizenship Test* (Alesi 2000). Activity books, periodicals, videos, audiotapes and locally produced handouts are used as supplements to the textbooks in each program.

The coordinator of the OPS ABE/GED program, Amy Tenning, listed four major components of the curriculum in promotional and informational flyers. Those components were confirmed in interviews with OPS teachers and with Ms. Tenning herself. The ABE program at OPS is comprised of four parts, two of which are covered in the ABE/GED classroom and two of which are covered in the ESL classroom. In the ABE/GED classroom, students develop skills in reading, writing, and mathematics, and some of those students prepare specifically for the General Education Development (GED) high-school equivalency test. In the OPS ESL classroom, students develop English literacy and speaking skills and receive citizenship instruction at the same time.

According to Tenning, the ESL classes vary in the degree to which the citizenship component is emphasized. Instructors who give high priority to citizenship instruction would be likely to cover U. S. civics and history thoroughly, explain the naturalization process, and provide guidance with the N-400 application and the INS interview. Instructors who give a lower priority to citizenship instruction would infuse civics and history into the English-language lessons, but give at most a cursory treatment of the

naturalization process. According to Ms. Tenning, instruction in speaking, reading, and writing English is very thorough in each of the classes. In virtually all of the classes, English instruction takes precedence over instruction in civics and the naturalization process.

The coordinator of the St. Agnes citizenship course, Gayle Reyes, also published the major content areas of the course in her promotional materials. Six content areas are listed in brochures: U. S. History, U. S. Government, Geography, Cultural Understanding, English Writing and Speaking, and Interview Practice. According to Reyes, each of these content areas receives nearly equal emphasis. An additional content area, instruction in civil rights and community resources, was offered during the first year the class was offered. Speakers from the Omaha police, city government, and social service agencies were allotted time at the beginning of each class to address such diverse issues as tenant rights, racial profiling, and child care. However, students did not respond favorably to the speakers, and soon began to skip the first segment of each class period. Outside speakers were eventually phased out, with the exception of an INS officer who visits one class period in each 8-week session.

From the interview with Reyes, it became clear that the St. Agnes class covered each of the three main content areas that have been defined as being particularly relevant: U. S. History and Government instruction, English literacy, and instruction in the naturalization process. Two content areas that were previously overlooked, Geography and Cultural Understanding, were also included. Presumably, geography instruction would provide students with more practical understanding of the physical make-up of the

country, whereas cultural understanding would provide students with understanding of the country's demographic make-up. Although neither of these content areas is essential for meeting the requirements of naturalization, they would seem fundamental to a broader conceptualization of citizenship.

The citizenship class offered at Metro Community College includes the three major competencies required to successfully naturalize as well as an emphasis on exercising the rights and duties of citizenship. The course objectives, as listed in the syllabus, read: "Students will gain a thorough understanding of the requirements for U. S. naturalization and the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship. U. S. history and government, English communication, INS procedures, the N-400 application, and INS interview practice are among the topics to be covered." Each of the main components of naturalizing is addressed here, and mention is also made of the "benefits and responsibilities of citizenship." The class is structured around a broad understanding of citizenship—citizenship in the country and in the world. Thus, the curriculum covers human rights and democracy on a global scale, the struggle for civil rights from the time of the Declaration of Independence to present-day, and the importance of political participation in the democratic process.

For the citizenship component of the ESL classes at Omaha Public Schools, students work from the Alesi textbook, *How to Prepare for the U. S. Citizenship Test*, as well as the Uncle Sam Activity Book, an ESL newspaper entitled *Easy English News* and a number of locally-produced handouts. In the textbook review, it was found that the Alesi text includes a thorough analysis of U. S. history and civics, relating U. S. history

to world history and emphasizing the enormous contributions made by immigrants throughout the country's history. Alesi also stresses the importance of civil rights and political participation in the democratic process. As a supplement to the textbook, the *Uncle Sam Activity Book* includes games to help students with memorizing the answers to the civics and history questions, and facilitates a more interactive classroom experience. *Easy English News*, a 12-page monthly newspaper from Eardley Publications, is targeted at adults with limited English proficiency and features articles on the INS, immigrant issues, the U. S. legal system, and U. S. history.

The St. Agnes and Metro Community College citizenship classes use the *Citizenship Now* text (Becker and Edwards 1995), but in different capacities. In the St. Agnes class, the text is used as an instructional resource,² whereas in the Metro class each class section is structured around a chapter of the text and students are required to purchase the text as part of the course fee. As was mentioned in Chapter 3, the Becker and Edwards text covers the naturalization process, U. S. history and government, and English literacy instruction rather thoroughly. Exercises included in the text serve as guides for understanding the N-400 and preparing for the INS interview. Similar to the Alesi text, citizenship is conceived broadly, with an emphasis on political participation and an understanding of the legal system.

The St. Agnes class relies more heavily on locally produced instructional materials than on the *Citizenship Now* text. For each lesson, a worksheet is distributed which includes questions from the INS list. Students are directed to write a complete

² Instructors in the St. Agnes class use the lessons in the *Citizenship Now* text as a resource for presenting U. S. History and government information. However, students are not required to purchase the textbook or complete the exercises accompanying the lessons.

sentence in response to each question. The same worksheet reappears in the following class session as a review quiz. Other instructional materials used in the St. Agnes class include videos of INS interviews, U. S. and world maps, posters depicting historical figures, and U. S. history books which the classroom volunteers summarize and present to the class in English and Spanish.

As a supplement to the *Citizenship Now* text, a booklet entitled “Documents in Civic Education” (Krainak 2000) is distributed to students in the Metro class and assigned as additional reading. The documents compiled in the booklet are divided into three sections: “The World,” “The Nation,” and “The Government.” In the first section, an excerpt of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and Elie Wiesel’s “Dedication of the Holocaust Memorial Museum” are presented, to help facilitate a global understanding of citizenship from the standpoint of human rights. In the second and third sections, documents are included which are specific to the history and government of the United States, such as the *Declaration of Independence*, Martin Luther King’s *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, a summary of the *Constitution of the United States*, and a summary of the Supreme Court decision in *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. Each of the summaries is written in simplified vocabulary, and the excerpts are accessible to students with limited English proficiencies.

Whereas the OPS classes rank English instruction as primary, followed by citizenship instruction, the Metro and St. Agnes classes switch priorities. In the OPS class, each class period is structured around one to two English lessons and civics instruction is infused into the reading and writing exercises. In St. Agnes and Metro

classes, one to two civics lessons are covered in each class period and English literacy instruction is integrated into those lessons.

Conclusions

The evidence presented here reveals that citizenship classes in Omaha are highly accessible in terms of locations, choices of settings, bilingual instruction or assistance, and cost. The geographical comparison of Omaha's non-citizen population and the location of citizenship classes (depicted in Map 4.1) revealed that the classes are being held in locations that would be most accessible to the target population. Furthermore, classes held in Omaha are quite accessible in terms of cost—the only class for which a fee is charged is the Metro class, and that fee is quite nominal. Each of the citizenship programs utilizes some form of bilingual instruction, however, only the St. Agnes class utilizes bilingual teachers exclusively. The OPS classes are monolingual, with a few exceptions, and the Metro class utilizes bilingual volunteers.

It was encouraging to discover that the two textbooks found to be most relevant to the teaching of U. S. citizenship in the previous chapter were being employed in the three citizenship programs. Both the Alesi and Becker and Edwards texts included instruction in civics and history (to include the material covered on the INS citizenship exam as well as instruction in the democratic process and political participation), instruction in English literacy, writing and grammar, instruction in the naturalization process, and exercises related to completing the N-400 application and preparing for the INS interview. Teacher interviews and observations of classes at St. Agnes, Metro, and two of the OPS sites revealed that the St. Agnes and Metro classes thoroughly covered all of the relevant

competencies, and the OPS classes primarily covered the English literacy and civics components. The Greater Omaha Packing citizenship class was the sole OPS offering to cover the INS interview and application components. The decreased emphasis on the naturalization process in the OPS classes is due to the fact that the program was structured around an ESL model.

This chapter has successfully answered two of the three research questions that were raised at the beginning of this study: (1) “How accessible are citizenship courses to those in need of naturalization assistance?” and (2) “How closely are the curricula of citizenship courses related to the skills and knowledge needed to complete the naturalization process?” It was found that with a few exceptions, citizenship courses held in Omaha, Nebraska, are both accessible to the target population and relevant in terms of the competencies required for naturalization. The research question that remains to be answered relates to student perceptions of citizenship classes. As was mentioned earlier, a telephone survey was conducted with current and former citizenship students to answer the question, “How effective do students perceive citizenship courses to be in helping them prepare for naturalization?” The following chapter will present findings and analysis related to students’ perceptions of the usefulness of citizenship courses and to what extent the class actually assisted them in becoming U. S. citizens.

CHAPTER 5

EFFECTIVENESS OF CITIZENSHIP COURSES

In this study, two research questions have been answered from the perspective of the outsider observing citizenship classes and other forms of naturalization assistance. The accessibility of classes was tested by looking for the presence of potential barriers and by plotting the locations of classes against the residential locations of the target populations on a map of the Omaha area. The curricula and instructional resources of citizenship classes were analyzed to determine how closely the content of classes coincides with the skills and knowledge needed to successfully complete the naturalization process. In the current chapter, I will be analyzing feedback gathered from former citizenship students to determine how satisfied they were with the classes and the extent to which the classes helped them achieve the ultimate goal of U. S. citizenship.

Three main hypotheses will be tested in this chapter in order to answer the research question, “How effective do students perceive citizenship courses to be in helping them prepare for naturalization?” The hypotheses are:

- 1) Students who submit to a citizenship interview after having taken the citizenship class will successfully naturalize.
- 2) Students are satisfied with the preparation for naturalization they gained through taking citizenship classes.
- 3) Students perceive that they did better (or will do better) on the INS interview as a result of taking citizenship classes.

The research findings in the previous chapter suggest that the citizenship classes offered in Omaha are closely tied to the INS requirements for naturalization. In addition, there is

ample evidence that students receive extra support from the teachers and volunteers in those classes. This support would likely help to allay students' fears about the naturalization process and thereby motivate them to complete the process. Therefore, it is expected that student's perceptions of the classes and their outcomes, in terms of becoming naturalized citizens, will be positive.

Methodology

A telephone survey was conducted with former citizenship students in the Omaha area during February and March of 2002. Contact information for all students who attended citizenship classes at St. Agnes Church and Metro Community College in the preceding 18 months was acquired from the coordinators of the two classes. Of the 61 students on the calling list, 33 submitted to a telephone interview, for a response rate of 54.1 percent. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Spanish; students whose primary language was not Spanish were interviewed in English.¹ It was not possible to gain contact information for the students in the Omaha Public Schools classes; therefore, those students are not represented in the survey.²

Separate interview scripts were used for students who were in the process of naturalizing and for students who had become U. S. citizens. The scripts used in both cases were very similar, with the exception of a few differences in wording and three questions that pertained only to those persons who had submitted to the INS citizenship interview. The majority of the survey questions were related to the usefulness of various

¹ A bilingual translator conducted the Spanish language interviews.

² The OPS coordinator gave me the option of interviewing ESL/citizenship students on-site during class sessions, but did not provide me with telephone numbers for those students. I chose not to disrupt the classes by holding on-site interviews.

elements of the citizenship classes, such as the U. S. civics component, English component, INS interview practice component, and the support and encouragement received from teachers and other students. Questions were also raised related to the structure of the class, overall usefulness of the class, and types of naturalization assistance received outside of class. Full text of the interview questions can be found in the appendix of this paper.

Following are the definitions of the independent and dependent variables gleaned from the survey responses:

Independent Variables

1. *Age: Respondent's age at the time of the survey, in 6 categories. Four of the six categories span 10 years; the first ("18-24") and the last ("65 and older") are the only unequal categories.*
2. *Country of origin (Mexico): Respondent's stated country of origin. For regression analysis, this is computed as a dummy variable, where Mexico=0 and All other countries=1.*
3. *Educational attainment: Respondent's educational attainment at the time of the survey, in 7 categories from grade school to graduate degree. For regression analysis, this is computed into three dummy variables: (1) Grade school=1, All other levels=0; (2) Some high school=1, All other levels=0; and (3) High school degree or higher education=1, All other levels=0.*
4. *Length of citizenship class: Number of weeks that the respondent attended class, in four roughly equal categories: 1-4 weeks, 5-8 weeks, 9-12 weeks, and More than 12 weeks.*
5. *Number of Types of Assistance: Count of 7 possible types of naturalization assistance employed by the student, including citizenship classes, English classes, assistance from a church, assistance from an agency, self-study, assistance from family and friends, and "other."*
6. *Primary language (Spanish): Respondent's stated primary language. For regression analysis, this is computed as a dummy variable, where Spanish=0 and All other languages=1.*

7. Sex: *A dichotomous variable, where Male=0 and Female=1.*
8. Stage in process (Citizenship): *Respondent's stage in the naturalization process at the time of the survey, in two categories, "naturalized citizen" or "non-naturalized."*
9. Years in U. S.: *Number of years that the respondent has lived in the United States at the time of the survey.*

Dependent Variables

- 1-10. Helpfulness of class topics: *Helpfulness of various components of the citizenship class, on a scale of 1-5 where 1=Not Helpful and 5=Very Helpful. Components included U. S. Civics, English writing practice, English reading practice, English speaking practice, learning about naturalization process, talking to students about the naturalization process, receiving support and encouragement from teachers and volunteers, receiving support from other students, practicing for the INS interview, and receiving help with the N-400 citizenship application.*
11. Overall helpfulness of class: *Student's perception of overall helpfulness of class, on 1-5 scale where 1=Not Helpful and 5=Very Helpful.*
12. Value of class in interview situation: *Student's perception of how well they would have done (or would do) in the INS interview without taking the class, on a 3-point scale, where 1=Not Nearly as Well, and 3=Just as Well.*
13. Satisfaction with INS treatment: *Student's satisfaction with the overall treatment the INS has given them, on a 5-point scale, where 1=Very Dissatisfied and 5=Very Satisfied.*
14. Interview Difficulty: *Student's perception of the difficulty of the interview, on a 5-point scale where 1=Very Easy and 5=Very Difficult. (This question was only asked of those students who had a citizenship interview.)*
15. Number of Interview Questions: *Student's recollection of how many questions were asked at interview, in three categories: 1-10, 11-20, and More than 20. (This question was only asked of those students who had a citizenship interview.)*
16. Satisfaction with Treatment at Interview: *Student's perception of how well the INS officer(s) treated him or her at the interview, on a 5-point satisfaction scale. (This question was only asked of those students who had a citizenship interview.)*

Each of the three hypotheses stated above will be tested with simple frequencies. A multiple regression will be used to determine if the independent variables, which include factors inherent to the citizenship courses and factors inherent to the individual, are predictors of greater or lesser satisfaction with the class. In addition, cross tables will be developed to determine if any of the independent variables correlate significantly with any of the dependent variables.

Many of the findings to be presented here are not directly related to the three hypotheses, but are instead exploratory in nature. The main purpose of presenting the results of the multiple regressions and cross tables, for example, is to look for relationships between attributes of the citizenship classes and students' perceptions of the usefulness of those classes, as well as relationships between students' perceptions and personal demographics. For example, do students with higher levels of educational attainment find as much value in citizenship classes as students with lower levels of educational attainment? Are students more satisfied with shorter classes than with longer classes? Due to the limited scope of this survey, it is doubtful that the findings presented here will lead to conclusive statements about the factors that determine greater or lesser levels of student satisfaction with citizenship courses. It is more likely that interesting trends will emerge that could be validated in a more comprehensive study.

Findings and Discussion

The frequency tables shown below provide descriptive information concerning the 33 former citizenship students who were interviewed for this study. Information is presented in these tables that allows us to judge the validity of the three hypotheses.

Table 5.1, for example, reveals that 12 of the 33 individuals are naturalized citizens. In the branching question at the beginning of the survey, respondents were asked whether or not they had taken the INS citizenship exam (INS interview). Of the 12 respondents who had taken the citizenship exam, all 12 (100 percent) indicated that they had completed the exam successfully and were now U. S. citizens. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted which states that students who have a citizenship interview after having taken the citizenship class will successfully naturalize.

Table 5.1. Stage in the naturalization process

Stage	Frequency	Percent
In Process of Naturalizing	21	63.6
Naturalized Citizen	12	36.4
Total	33	100.0

Table 5.2. Number of preparations taken

Number of Preparations*	Frequency	Percent
1	4	12.1
2	14	42.4
3	10	30.3
4	5	15.2
Total	33	100.0
Mean	2.48	-
Median	2.00	-

Validation of the first hypothesis, as encouraging as it may seem, does not necessarily prove the worth of taking citizenship classes. It is quite possible that all twelve of the former students who interviewed with the INS would have been just as successful had they never attended a citizenship class. Furthermore, the vast majority of students prepared for naturalization in other ways, besides taking citizenship classes. As is shown in Table 5.2, 14 of the 33 former citizenship students (42.4%) undertook two types of preparation, 10 (30.3%) undertook three types of preparation, and 5 (15.2%) undertook four types of preparation for naturalization. Preparations may include attending citizenship classes, attending English classes, receiving naturalization assistance from a church, agency, friend or family member, and self-study. It is for these reasons that questions were included on the survey that addressed the helpfulness of the citizenship classes in general and specific components of the citizenship classes in particular.

A summary of interviewees' responses to the questions dealing with the helpfulness of citizenship courses is provided in Table 5.3. A majority of students found each of the 11 areas either "Helpful" or "Very Helpful." Relatively speaking, the support provided by citizenship teachers and volunteers was found helpful by the highest percentage of students; 100 percent of former students found teacher/volunteer support helpful, with a mean score of 4.67 on a 1 to 5 scale where 1=Not Helpful and 5=Very Helpful. Similarly high mean scores were given to "Overall Helpfulness of the Course" and "Conversing with Students About the Naturalization Process." This suggests that the social component of these classes, i.e. interaction between students and teacher-student

interaction, are actually considered more helpful to citizenship students than the actual content of the classes. The “INS Interview Practice” component, which is a very interactive exercise and perhaps the most relevant exercise in terms of success on the citizenship interview, was found helpful by over 90 percent of students, and had a relatively high mean score of 4.34.

Table 5.3. Helpfulness of citizenship course components

Course Area	Percent Who Found Helpful	N	Mean*	Median	Standard Deviation
Support from Teacher	100.0	33	4.67	5.00	.48
Overall Helpfulness of Course	94.3	31	4.58	5.00	.50
Conversing with Students about Naturalization Process	90.9	33	4.39	4.00	.66
INS Interview Practice	90.9	32	4.34	4.00	.70
U. S. History and Government	84.9	33	4.42	5.00	.75
Support from Other Students	84.8	33	4.36	5.00	.82
English Reading Practice	81.8	33	4.18	4.00	.88
English Speaking Practice	81.8	33	4.27	4.00	.84
Learning about Naturalization Process	81.8	33	4.45	5.00	.79
N-400 Application Practice	78.8	31	4.23	4.00	.72
English Writing Practice	72.8	33	4.12	4.00	.96

*Mean is based on 1-5 scale, where 1=Not Helpful and 5=Very Helpful

Based on the results presented in Table 5.3, the hypothesis stating that students are satisfied with the preparation for naturalization they gained through taking citizenship classes is accepted. It is important to note, however, that the core content areas of U. S. Civics and English instruction were not rated as helpful as support provided by teachers, conversing with other students about their experiences with naturalization, and INS interview practice. In addition, English Reading, Speaking, and Writing practice all ranked behind the support and encouragement provided by other students. It appears that students do not feel that the literacy instruction gained in the citizenship class is as helpful as other components of the class. It is also possible that, because these classes concentrate primarily on U. S. civics and the process of naturalization, students do not feel the English literacy component is emphasized enough.

Frequencies cross tables and multiple linear regression statistics are presented in Tables 5.4 through 5.11 to provide additional insight into the factors that influence student satisfaction with various components of citizenship classes. While these statistics do not necessarily support or refute the hypotheses, they allow exploration into the causal relationships that influence student perceptions. Table 5.4 concerns the length, in weeks, of the citizenship classes taken by the interviewees. A slim majority of students (51.5 percent) attended classes for 9-12 weeks. An additional 27.3 percent attended classes for 5-8 weeks. A cross tabulation of class length to satisfaction with the overall helpfulness of the class, depicted in Table 5.5, reveals that students who take longer classes are less likely to find the classes “Very Helpful.” This relationship was found to be significant at the .05 level (one-tailed significance).

Table 5.4. Length of citizenship classes

Length of Classes (in Weeks)	Frequency	Percent
1-4	3	9.1
5-8	9	27.3
9-12	17	51.5
More than 12	3	9.1
No response	1	3.0
Total	33	100.0

Table 5.5. Relationship of class length to overall helpfulness of the class

Perceived Helpfulness of Class		Class Length				Total
		1-4 Weeks	5-8 Weeks	9-12 Weeks	More than 12 Weeks	
Helpful	Count	2	1	8	2	13
	%	100.0%	11.1%	47.1%	66.7%	41.9%
Very Helpful	Count		8	9	1	18
	%		88.9%	52.9%	33.3%	58.1%
Total	Count	2	9	17	3	31
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

One-sided Chi-Square significance of cross table is .032 (significant at < .05 level).

Phi value is .463, with one-sided significance of .032.

In Tables 5.6 and 5.7, results of multiple regressions are presented that reveal predictors of student satisfaction with the U. S. Civics and English Oral Communication

components of citizenship courses. The first analysis reveals that the length of the citizenship class and the number of preparations undertaken by the student are significant predictors of how helpful the student is likely to find the U. S. Civics component of the class. The well-prepared student is likely to find the U. S. Civics component more helpful than is the student who has taken fewer preparations towards becoming naturalized. An inverse relationship characterizes the relationship between class length and satisfaction with U. S. Civics instruction, however. Students who attend classes for longer periods of time are less likely to find U. S. Civics instruction helpful (a finding that echoes that which was represented in Table 5.5). While not quite significant at the .05 level, Table 5.6 also suggests that education may affect satisfaction with the civics component of the classes. Respondents with some high school education scored one-half point higher on average than respondents who had not attended high school.

A similar relationship exists between the number of preparations undertaken by the student and the satisfaction with the “English Speaking” component of the citizenship course. Respondents who took greater numbers of preparations for naturalization, such as taking English classes and receiving assistance from a church or agency, are more likely to find the oral communication component of the class to be helpful. It was also found that respondents who defined their educational attainment as “Some High School” were more likely to find the oral communication component of the class helpful than were students who reported higher or lower levels of educational attainment.

Table 5.6. Predictors of student satisfaction with U. S. civics component of citizenship class

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.772 ^a	.596	.394	.5626

a. Predictors: (Constant), No. of Preparations, Citizen, Class Length, Age, Years in U.S., Sex, Mexico, Spanish, Some H. S. Education, H. S. Diploma or Greater

Coefficients^a

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.500	.679		6.625	.000
No. of Preparations	.420	.165	.539	2.551	0.019*
Citizen	-2.80E-02	.237	-.019	-.118	.907
Class Length	-.577	.174	-.597	-3.317	0.003*
Age	.230	.208	.245	1.105	.282
Years in U. S.	-3.03E-02	.026	-.275	-1.151	.263
Sex	.150	.263	.101	.570	.575
Mexico	.196	.447	.125	.438	.666
Spanish	-.832	.635	-.462	-1.310	.205
Some H. S. Education	.556	.274	.365	2.029	.056
H. S. Diploma or Greater	.183	.491	.113	.373	.713

a. Dependent Variable: U. S. Civics

*Significant at .05 level or below.

Table 5.7. Predictors of student satisfaction with “English speaking” component of citizenship class

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.762 ^a	.581	.371	.6537

a. Predictors: (Constant), No. of Preparations, Citizen, Class Length, Age, Years in U.S., Sex, Mexico, Spanish, Some H. S. Education. H. S. Diploma or Greater

Coefficients^a

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.852	.789		3.613	.002
Citizen	1.251E-02	.276	.008	.045	.964
No. of Preparations	.487	.192	.547	2.541	.019
Sex	-.185	.305	-.109	-.605	.552
Mexico	-.644	.520	-.360	-1.239	.230
Spanish	1.289	.738	.628	1.747	.096
Some High School	1.377	.318	.794	4.329	.000
H. S. Degree or More	.316	.571	.170	.553	.587
Class Length	-4.51E-02	.202	-.041	-.223	.826
Years in U. S.	4.148E-02	.031	.330	1.356	.190
Age	-.255	.242	-.239	-1.056	.304

a. Dependent Variable: English Speaking

*Significant at .05 level or below.

Table 5.8. Impact of citizenship class on INS citizenship interview

Students' perceptions of how well they would have performed/would perform on INS interview without taking classes	Frequency	Percent
Almost as Well	6	18.2
Just as Well	26	78.8
No Response	1	3.0
Total	33	100.0

Table 5.9. Relationship of educational attainment to impact of class on interview performance

Students' perception of how well they would have performed/would perform on INS interview without taking classes		Educational Attainment						Total
		Grade School	Some High School	High School Diploma	Some College	2-Year College Degree	4-Year College Degree	
Almost as Well	Count	1	1	1	2	1		6
	%	7.7%	10.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%		19.4%
Just as Well	Count	12	9	2	1		1	25
	%	92.3%	90.0%	66.7%	33.3%		100.0%	80.6%
Total	Count	13	10	3	3	1	1	31
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

One-sided Chi-Square significance is .028 (significant at < .05 level).

Phi value is .590, with one-sided significance of .028.

Tables 5.8 and 5.9 are related to the final hypothesis, which states that students perceive that they would do better on the INS interview as a result of taking citizenship classes. Based on the frequency data, as presented in Table 5.8, it appears that the majority of students do not hold this perception. Nearly 4 out of 5 former citizenship students indicated that they would do just as well on the INS interview if they had not taken a citizenship class. The remaining students responded that they would perform “Almost as Well” without the class. The cross tabulation in Table 5.9 shows a significant relationship (one-sided significance at the .05 level and a Phi of .59) between educational attainment and the perception of how the citizenship class impacts interview performance. This suggests that students with higher levels of educational attainment are more likely to perceive that taking a citizenship class improves their performance on the INS interview. However, the numbers of students who responded that they would perform “Almost as Well” as opposed to “Just as Well” are so few that it is unwise to take this relationship as conclusive. Based on the data presented in Table 5.8 (which shows that 80 percent of former citizenship students surveyed do not value the class in terms of interview preparation), the hypothesis stating that students will perceive that their performance on the INS interview will improve as a result of taking citizenship classes is rejected.

The remaining sets of analyses are not directly related to the three hypotheses that were tested here, but they are presented instead for exploratory purposes. Earlier in the study, mention was made of the dynamics of the relationship between the INS and its clients. One of the major reasons for offering citizenship classes, for example, is because

of the perception that the INS does not offer sufficient naturalization services to permanent residents. In addition, many immigrants are hesitant to approach the agency due to general fear and anxiety towards the INS, and therefore do not obtain needed services.

In Tables 5.10 through 5.15, findings are presented related to respondents' perceptions of the difficulty of the INS interview, the number of questions asked at the INS interview, and the treatment respondents received from the INS. Tables 5.10, 5.11, and 5.12 present simple frequencies of responses to questions about the INS interview itself. These questions were targeted to the 12 respondents who had completed the citizenship interview. Of the respondents who had been interviewed by the INS, 58.3 percent reported that between 1 and 10 questions were asked during the interview and 33.3 percent reported that between 11 and 20 questions were asked. Responses were more varied on the question of the difficulty of the exam: 41.7 percent found the exam "Somewhat Difficult," and another 41.7 percent found the exam "Somewhat Easy." Regardless of whether the exam was perceived to be difficult or easy, almost all respondents were satisfied with the treatment they received at the interview. Fifty percent (6 of 12) indicated that they were "Very Satisfied" with the treatment they received and an additional 41.7 percent (5 of 12) were "Somewhat Satisfied." As was mentioned previously, all 12 successfully passed the citizenship interview.

Table 5.10. Number of questions asked at INS citizenship interview*

Range	Count	Percent
1-10 Questions	7	58.3
11-20 Questions	4	33.3
More than 20 Questions	1	8.3
Total	12	100.0

*Population: Survey respondents who had taken INS citizenship interview

Table 5.11. Difficulty of INS citizenship interview*

Difficulty of Interview	Count	Percent
Very Difficult	0	0.0
Somewhat Difficult	5	41.7
Neutral	1	8.3
Somewhat Easy	5	41.7
Very Easy	1	8.3
Total	12	100.0
Mean	2.83	-

*Population: Survey respondents who had taken INS citizenship interview

**Mean is based on 1-5 scale, where 1=Very Easy and 5=Very Difficult

Table 5.12. Satisfaction with treatment received at INS interview*

Level of Satisfaction	Count	Percent
Very Satisfied	6	50.0
Somewhat Satisfied	5	41.7
Neutral	1	8.3
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0	0.0
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0
Total	12	100.0
Mean	4.42	-

*Population: Survey respondents who had taken INS citizenship interview

**Mean is based on 1-5 scale, where 1=Very Dissatisfied and 5=Very Satisfied

Tables 5.13, 5.14, and 5.15 give further insight into the factors that predict overall satisfaction with the INS. Satisfaction could include respondents' perceptions of how they have been treated by INS interviewers as well as the treatment received from front-counter personnel at the INS field office or over the telephone. In the case that respondents have had interactions with the enforcement side of the INS, perceptions of how well they were treated by enforcement officials may also be entered into the equation. Table 5.13 shows evidence that there may be an inverse relationship between respondents' educational attainment and satisfaction with treatment received by the INS. As educational attainment rises from grade school level to the 2-year college degree level, respondents are somewhat less likely to report that they are "Very Satisfied" with the overall treatment they received from the INS. A somewhat stronger relationship was

found between satisfaction with INS treatment and one's stage in the naturalization process, as shown in Table 5.14. Respondents who had successfully naturalized were significantly more likely to be "Very Satisfied" with INS treatment than were respondents who were currently in the process of naturalizing.

The final analysis, shown in Table 5.15, is a multiple regression of possible predictors of satisfaction with INS treatment. Similar to the findings in the preceding cross tables, educational attainment and citizenship status were both found to be significant predictors of satisfaction with INS treatment. As educational attainment rises, one's level of satisfaction with INS treatment is expected to decrease by as much as one point on a 5-point satisfaction scale, all other factors being equal. Naturalized citizens are expected to rate their satisfaction with INS treatment a half-point higher than individuals in the process of naturalizing. Age was found to be a somewhat weaker predictor of satisfaction with INS treatment, with increased age leading to lower levels of satisfaction.

Table 5.13. Relationship of educational attainment to satisfaction with INS treatment

Level of Satisfaction		Educational Attainment						Total
		Grade School	Some High School	High School Diploma	Some College	2-Year College Degree	4-Year College Degree	
Neutral	Count			1	1			2
	%			33.3%	33.3%			6.5%
Satisfied	Count	3	3	1	2	1		10
	%	23.1%	30.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%		32.3%
Very Satisfied	Count	10	7	1			1	19
	%	76.9%	70.0%	33.3%			100.0%	61.3%
Total	Count	13	10	3	3	1	1	31
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square one-sided significance is .061. Phi value is .702, with one-sided significance of .061.

Table 5.14. Relationship of stage in naturalization process to satisfaction with INS treatment

Level of Satisfaction		Stage in Naturalization Process		Total
		In Process of Naturalizing	Naturalized Citizen	
Neutral	Count	1	1	2
	%	5.3%	8.3%	6.5%
Satisfied	Count	9	1	10
	%	47.4%	8.3%	32.3%
Very Satisfied	Count	9	10	19
	%	47.4%	83.3%	61.3%
Total	Count	19	12	31
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square one-sided significance is .038 (significant at < .05 level).

Phi value is .407, with one-sided significance of .038.

Table 5.15. Predictors of satisfaction with overall treatment received from INS

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742 ^a	.550	.325	.5126

a. Predictors: (Constant), No. of Preparations, Citizen, Class Length, Age, Years in U.S., Sex, Mexico, Spanish, Some H. S. Education, H. S. Diploma or Greater

Coefficients^a

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.994	.619		8.071	.000
No. of Preparations	1.934E-02	.150	.029	.129	.899
Citizen	.574	.216	.455	2.655	.015*
Class Length	.138	.158	.166	.873	.393
Age	-.294	.189	-.363	-1.550	.137
Years in U. S.	8.716E-03	.024	.092	.363	.720
Sex	-.134	.239	-.104	-.558	.583
Mexico	.152	.408	.112	.372	.714
Spanish	-4.71E-02	.579	-.030	-.081	.936
Some H. S. Education	-9.45E-02	.249	-.072	-.379	.709
H. S. Diploma or Greater	-1.039	.448	-.741	-2.322	0.03*

a. Dependent Variable: Satisfaction with INS Treatment

*Significant at .05 level or below.

Conclusions

A handful of questions were answered in this chapter and many more were generated. Overwhelming support was found for the contention that citizenship students who take the INS citizenship exam will pass the exam. One hundred percent of the students who took the exam reported success. It was also found that students were quite satisfied with the preparation for naturalization that they gained during the course of the citizenship classes. Students were most satisfied with the support and encouragement

they received from their teachers, the conversations they held with other students about the naturalization process, and their experiences practicing for the INS interview.

English reading, writing and speaking practice was ranked somewhat lower; however, a commanding majority still found these components helpful.

The question of the overall value of the class in terms of INS interview preparation is left open. Students are satisfied with the classes overall and with the preparation gained from the various components of the classes, but they do not feel that their performance on the INS interview will be enhanced as a result of having taken the class. Therefore, the final hypothesis, which stated that students perceive that they will do better on the INS interview as a result of taking citizenship classes, was rejected. Further study of naturalized citizens is warranted to determine if this perception is prevalent among those who have completed the process. If it holds true that citizenship courses are not perceived to enhance performance on the interview, the value of such classes may be in question. On the other hand, if permanent residents seek out citizenship classes for reasons other than passing the INS interview, it may be necessary to explore the nature of their motivations. If citizenship students are primarily interested in the motivational component of the classes, perhaps the wrong topics are being emphasized or the structure of the class should be revisited. Perhaps teachers and coordinators of these classes only assume that their students are attending for the sole purpose of becoming naturalized citizens. In such case, a relevant research question for a future study would be to determine student motivations for attending citizenship classes.

Interesting results were also found in the analysis of respondents' perceptions of how well they had been treated by the INS. While this question may seem to be on the periphery of this particular study, it is truly at the heart of a number of pertinent issues regarding immigrant rights and the INS. A movement is growing in this country to educate immigrants of their rights and help them defend themselves against the abuse of those rights. At the same time, the Justice Department is detaining an unreported number of immigrants for violations great and small, as well as for suspicion of such violations. In the conclusion to this study, I will relate these findings to the greater issue of how to encourage naturalization and work towards the goals of inclusion and political mobilization.

CHAPTER 6

NEW PERSPECTIVES AND NEXT STEPS

Earlier in this study, a number of explanations were given as to why some permanent residents naturalize as soon as they are eligible, others wait several years, and still others never naturalize. Evidence has been found in the research that more than 90 percent of permanent residents intend to become naturalized but are somewhat discouraged by the process and the costs (Pachon and DeSipio 1994). Costs include the \$310 application fee but also the time involved in applying, preparing for the interview, and waiting for the final outcome. Despite these barriers, there have been enormous increases in applications processed and persons naturalized over the past decade. This has been attributed to measures that have made naturalization easier as well as measures that have made non-citizen status less attractive.

Pachon and DeSipio (1994) and Alvarez (1987) found that the vast majority of naturalized citizens undertook some form of preparation prior to their INS citizenship interviews. Nearly 4 out of 5 naturalized citizens studied English and Civics prior to naturalization, although most of them did not engage in this study for the purpose of naturalizing. This is likely due to the fact that, for non-native English speakers, literacy instruction usually precludes naturalization by many years. Furthermore, the study of U. S. history and government is included in the core curriculum of elementary, secondary, and post-secondary educational institutions across the country. This begs the question of

whether or not English and Civics are truly necessary components of naturalization assistance.

For Chapters 4 and 5 of this study, citizenship preparation classes in the Omaha area were researched for indications of how well these classes were serving the target population. Omaha's foreign-born population has more than doubled in the past decade and with more permanent residents naturalizing than ever before, it stands to reason that large numbers of permanent residents in the Omaha area would be in need of naturalization assistance of some kind. The specific research questions addressed in this research concerned the accessibility of these classes, the correlation between the content of these classes and the skills necessary for naturalization, and the perceived effectiveness of the classes in preparing permanent residents for naturalization. Field research and a bit of amateur cartography revealed that the classes were very accessible in terms of location and cost. Over a dozen free classes were located in neighborhoods with relatively high concentrations of non-citizens. Classroom observations and textbook reviews revealed that the curricula of the citizenship classes were closely tied to the knowledge and skills needed for naturalization, including English literacy, U. S. Civics, and an understanding of the naturalization process and procedures.

In Chapter 5, the effectiveness of Omaha's citizenship classes was explored, with interesting results. The question of effectiveness was broken down into three hypotheses, all of which centered on student perceptions and outcomes. It was found that students perceived the classes to be very helpful as they prepared for naturalization. It was also found that each of the students who submitted to the citizenship interview after taking a

citizenship class successfully passed and became U. S. citizens. However, the hypothesis was rejected which stated that students believe they will do better (or would have done better) on the INS interview as a result of taking citizenship classes. In other words, students find the courses helpful and appreciate the support they receive from the teachers and volunteers of the classes, but they do not perceive that the classes are necessary. If these perceptions hold true for students who take courses in other cities, it is quite possible that the typical format of citizenship classes (i.e. 8 to 10 weeks, in a classroom, studying English and U. S. Civics, and practicing for the INS interview) needs to be revisited.

Policy Environment

The effect of the policy environment on naturalization rates is unquestionable: INS policies, programs, and procedures which have promoted naturalization, such as the Citizenship USA program and the reduction in waiting times for application processing, contributed to the enormous numbers of citizenship applications in the 1990s. Increased naturalization rates have also been attributed to legislation that has negatively impacted the status of permanent residents, such as Proposition 187 in California and the Personal Responsibility and Work Reconciliation Act of 1996. Since 1996, many of the restrictions in social services (such as Medicare and Social Security retirement benefits) for permanent residents have been lifted, and others (such as food stamps and Supplemental Social Security disability benefits) are currently being addressed in the “Fix ‘96” legislation. If the pendulum swings towards greater benefits for permanent residents, it is likely that naturalization rates will decrease to levels typical of the 1980s

and early 1990s. On the other hand, if the Justice Department continues to detain and deport immigrants at current levels, permanent residents may seek the more secure status of U. S. citizen, causing naturalization rates to plateau or even rise.

As pressure mounts to enhance the service role of the INS, it is incumbent on the Justice Department, Congress, and the INS Commissioner to support naturalization outreach in the INS. In creating new and improved naturalization services within the INS, the agency would build a trusting relationship with its clients and with immigrant-serving organizations. In strengthening the resources and coordination of existing naturalization services, the INS would improve the ability of schools and non-profits to support permanent residents who desire to become U. S. citizens.

Recommendations

At the time of this writing, a multitude of issues are coming to a head that will have a lasting impact on the lives of current and future immigrants. The possible legalization of undocumented workers, the prospect of state and local police enforcing naturalization laws, the reorganization of the INS into separate service and enforcement agencies, and the detention of growing numbers of immigrants by the Justice Department are just a few of the political issues which will affect the lives of immigrants for better or worse. It is imperative that those who are affected by these measures are represented in the political decision-making process.

Unquestionably, the naturalization of immigrants holds many benefits for immigrant communities and for the country as a whole. Citizenship brings with it the right to vote for leaders and to exercise political leadership. Citizenship is also part of the

total inclusion of immigrants into the political, social, economic, and educational life of our country. As we face economic and military crises, the inclusion of immigrants in the economy and the armed forces is an absolute necessity. By upgrading the political status of immigrants, whether through legalization or naturalization, we are in effect securing the civic and economic future of the country.

In regards to the overall effectiveness of citizenship classes as a form of naturalization assistance, further research is warranted. Alternate forms of naturalization assistance, such as the one- and two-day workshops sponsored by the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) and drop-in assistance at naturalization help centers, should be evaluated to determine if these types of assistance are more or less effective than extended classroom instruction. These options are quicker, less expensive, and have the potential for reaching more individuals. In addition, the motivations of current citizenship students should be further evaluated. If students are attending classes primarily to receive support and encouragement from teachers and other students and do not believe the classes have value in terms of enhancing performance at the INS interview, the core content of the classes may need to be shifted. Perhaps the Omaha Public Schools model, which stresses quality English instruction and adds citizenship as a supplementary component, is a more effective approach.

Once it has been determined which of the existing approaches are most effective, the question becomes how to deliver the package to those in need of naturalization assistance and how to involve the public sector in the delivery of the approach. Non-

profit agencies and educational institutions have borne much of the responsibility thus far in providing citizenship education and naturalization assistance. If a workable approach were generated which employs governmental and non-profit resources, such as workshops coordinated by local immigrant service agencies and INS field offices or increased governmental funding to Adult Basic Education ESL programs to provide supplemental civics instruction, schools and non-profits would benefit from greater support and would quite possibly achieve greater results for their efforts (in terms of reaching a larger portion of the population). Most importantly, immigrants would benefit from the coordinated effort to provide services that are more efficient and more relevant to their needs.

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OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

*I hereby declare, on oath,
that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any
foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have
heretofore been a subject or citizen;
that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America
against all enemies, foreign and domestic;
that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same;
that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law;
that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when
required by the law;
that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by
the law; and
that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so
help me God.*

SOURCE: *A Guide to Naturalization*, U. S. Department of Justice Immigration and Naturalization Service, 2000.

Documents in Civic Education

For U. S.
Citizenship
Preparation



Compiled by Kathy Krainak

Documents	Page
<i>The World: Human Rights and Democracy Around the World</i>	
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (summary and excerpt)	3
Elie Wiesel's dedication of Holocaust Memorial Museum (excerpt)	4
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Universal Declaration of Human Rights

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to condemn the terrible acts that have violated the human rights throughout the world, such as the killing of the Jews by Hitler's army during World War II. The Declaration recognizes certain freedoms which all people should enjoy, including freedom of speech, freedom from fear and freedom from want. Also recognized as human rights are equality, freedom from slavery and the right to own property.

Portions of the 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights follow:

Article 1: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They [should treat each other] in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2: Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms . . . in this Declaration . . . regardless of race, color, sex, language . . . national origin, property, birth, or other status. . . .

Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4: No one should be held in slavery . . .

Article 5: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel . . . punishment.

Article 7: All are equal before the law and [should be given] equal protection under the law. . .

Article 14: Everyone has the right to . . . asylum from persecution [in other countries].

Article 17: Everyone has the right to own property . . .

Article 19: Everyone has the right to freedom of assembly.

Article 24: Everyone has the right to rest and leisure . . .

Article 25: Everyone has the right to [a basic] standard of living . . .

Article 26: Everyone has the right to education, [including free basic education].

Dedication of the Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D. C., April 1993

By Elie Wiesel, writer and Holocaust survivor

“All events connected with [the Holocaust] defy human understanding. It is not because I cannot explain, that you will not understand; it is because you will not understand that I cannot explain. The essence of this tragedy is that it can never be fully communicated ...

“And yet, we are duty-bound to try. Not to do so would mean to forget. To forget would mean to kill the victims a second time. We could not prevent their first death; we must not allow them to vanish again. Memory is not only a victim over time, it is also a triumph over injustice.

“This is one of the lessons we have learned. There are others. We have learned that though the Holocaust was principally a Jewish tragedy, its implications are universal. Though not all victims were Jewish, all Jews were victims. We have learned that whatever happens to one community, ultimately affects all others We have learned that though every human being has the right to be different, none has the right to be indifferent to suffering.”

The Declaration of Independence (1776)

by Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson, a lawyer and farmer from Virginia, was asked by Congress to write the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson and other Congress members believed that England was violating the rights of Americans, and that a new government should be formed that was independent from England. The declaration that the Americans should be independent from England was based on two basic ideas:

- 1) All people have rights that cannot be taken away, including “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”
- 2) A government can exist only with the consent of the people.

The Declaration was adopted on July 4, 1776, the day that is now known as Independence Day. One belief that the Declaration is based on is that *all men are created equal*. This belief has been an inspiration not only to the soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War, but to men and women who have fought for equal rights to this day.

Following are portions of the *Declaration of Independence*:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government ...

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America ...solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States ...

The Emancipation Proclamation (1863)

by Abraham Lincoln

On January 1, 1863, in the middle of the Civil War between the northern and southern States, President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed the southern slaves and allowed African Americans to join the Union Army. Soon after the Proclamation was made, African Americans began to join the Union Army. After the Union Army won the Civil War in 1865, the 13th amendment to the Constitution officially prohibited slavery.

Portions of the Emancipation Proclamation follow:

A Proclamation:

...And by virtue of the power ... I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within [southern] States ... shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God...

The Star-Spangled Banner (1814)

by Francis Scott Key

Francis Scott Key wrote our national anthem, *The Star Spangled Banner*, after watching an attack by the English on Fort McHenry in Maryland during the War of 1812.

Oh, say! can you see, by the dawn's early light
 What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
 Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight
 O'er ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
 And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air
 Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
 Oh, say, does that Star-Spangled banner yet wave,
 O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

The New Colossus (1883)

by Emma Lazarus

The Statue of Liberty was meant to be a gift a friendship from France to the United States. But Jewish-American poet Emma Lazarus saw the statue as a symbol of the openness of the United States to immigrants from all over the world. Lazarus' poem, "The New Colossus" was written in 1883 to help raise money for the statue's pedestal, and was later carved into the pedestal.

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
 With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
 Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
 A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
 Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
 Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
 Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
 The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
 "Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
 With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
 Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
 The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
 Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
 I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

From *The Poems of Emma Lazarus*, vol. 1 (1889), 2

Letter from Birmingham Jail (1963)

by Martin Luther King (1929-1968)

American minister and civil rights leader Martin Luther King wrote this famous letter from his cell in Birmingham Jail in April of 1963. Portions of the letter follow.

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. ...

“Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. ...

“One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law. ...

“Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever. The yearning for freedom eventually manifests itself, and that is what has happened to the American Negro. Something within has reminded him of his birthright of freedom, and something without has reminded him that it can be gained. Consciously or unconsciously, he has been caught up by the Zeitgeist*, and with his black brothers of Africa and his brown and yellow brothers of Asia, South America and the Caribbean, the United States Negro is moving with a sense of urgency toward the promised land of racial justice.”

*Zeitgeist: The outlook of a period or generation.

The Constitution of the United States

The Constitution has been the supreme law of the United States for over 200 years. It was approved in 1789 and still remains the foundation of our government. No law may be passed that does not follow the Constitution, and it is up to the Supreme Court to decide whether or not laws follow the Constitution. Seven articles were included in the original document that described the structure of the government and the separation of power between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Twenty-seven amendments, or changes, have been made to the Constitution. The Bill of Rights is the first 10 amendments, passed in 1791 to protect the basic rights of Americans. *A summary of the 27 amendments to the Constitution follow:*

<i>Amendment</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Summary</i>
1	1791	Forbids Congress to interfere with religion, free speech, free press, the right to assemble peaceably, or to petition the Government
2	1791	Guarantees the right to have weapons
3	1791	Guarantees against lodging soldiers in private homes without consent
4	1791	Provides that no person or their belongings will be searched or seized without a search warrant
5	1791	Requires that a jury hear serious criminal offenses, no one should be tried twice for same offense, and no one has to witness against himself or herself
6	1791	Requires a speedy trial and fair jury for criminal offenses
7	1791	In lawsuits about anything valued over \$20, a trial by jury should be allowed
8	1791	Prohibits very high bails or fines, and cruel and unusual punishment
9	1791	Declares that rights not included in the Constitution should not be taken away from the people
10	1791	Powers not given to the U. S. are reserved for the States or the people

The Constitution of the United States

Amendments passed from 1795-1992

<i>Amendment</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Summary</i>
11	1795	A citizen of one state cannot sue another state in Federal court
12	1804	Electors must vote for President and Vice President separately
13	1865	Ended slavery
14	1868	All persons born or naturalized in the U. S. are citizens
15	1870	No person can be kept from voting because of race or color
16	1913	Congress has the power to collect income tax
17	1913	Senators are to be elected by the people
18	1919	Prohibited making, selling, or transporting alcoholic beverages
19	1920	Gave voting rights to women
20	1933	The President, Vice President and Congress shall take office in January
21	1933	Did away with the 18 th Amendment
22	1951	The same person cannot be elected President more than twice
23	1961	Citizens living in the District of Columbia may vote for President, Vice President and Congress
24	1964	Prohibited voting tax
25	1967	The Vice President becomes Acting President when the President is disabled
26	1971	Citizens may vote when 18 years old
27	1992	Senators' and Representatives' pay should not change until after an election

Landmark Supreme Court Cases

Marbury v. Madison (1803)

Just as George Washington helped shape the executive branch of government, the 3rd chief justice, John Marshall, shaped the role that the courts would play.

The critical importance of *Marbury* is the powers assumed by the Supreme Court:

- Authority to declare acts of Congress, and acts of the president, unconstitutional if they exceeded the powers granted by the Constitution.
- **Even more important, the Court became the final authority on what the Constitution meant. The Supreme Court became an equal partner in government, and it has played that role ever since.**

The Court would not declare another act of Congress unconstitutional until 1857, and it has used that power sparingly. But through its role as the authority of the Constitution, it has, especially in the 20th century, been the chief agency for the expansion of individual rights.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954)

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the leading civil rights organization in the country, had never accepted the "separate but equal" rule, and in the 1940s and 1950s filed a series of cases showing that separate facilities violated the principle of equality.

The ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which did away with school segregation, is one of the most important in American history. No nation committed to democracy can keep minority groups in a position of inferiority.

According to J. Harvie Wilkinson, who is now a federal judge, *Brown* "was humane, among the most humane moments in all our history. It was...a great political achievement, both in its uniting of the Court and in the steady way it addressed the nation."

With the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the nation picked up where it had left off with civil rights more than 80 years earlier, and began to integrate the black minority into the American political system.

Landmark Supreme Court Cases

Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)

Winston Churchill said that the true measure of a civilized society is how it treats people accused of crimes. Although the Bill of Rights included a number of protections for people accused of crimes, many of these protections were ignored by state courts, which were held to be outside the reach of the federal Bill of Rights. This policy began to change in the 1930s, and during the 1960s was changed quickly by the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren.

The 6th Amendment, which guarantees the right to an attorney, does not mention providing lawyers for poor people. However, the federal government began providing lawyers in serious cases in the 19th century, and a number of states also provided lawyers for the poor in felony trials in the 20th century. By the early 1960s a majority of the Court felt the time had come to extend the Sixth Amendment right to counsel to all persons accused of crime. That ruling came in *Gideon v. Wainwright*.

The reasoning behind this and other Court rulings in the 1960s was that constitutional rights should not depend on a person's wealth or education. In these rulings, the Court opened up the criminal justice system, made it more democratic, and permitted even people accused of crimes to share in what the Constitution promised to all Americans, basic liberties to ensure that they received a fair trial.

Miranda v. Arizona (1966)

As in *Gideon v. Wainwright*, the decision in *Miranda* upheld the Constitution by protecting the rights of persons accused of crimes.

The defendant in this case, Ernesto Miranda, was arrested in Arizona for raping an 18-year-old girl. During police questioning, he confessed to the crime without being told that he could have a lawyer help him. Studies showed that police often physically abused people who were arrested and tricked them into confessing. The Court ruled in favor of Miranda, based on the 5th Amendment that states that no one has to be a witness against himself.

Because of *Miranda v. Arizona* and *Gideon v. Wainwright*, police officers must read people their rights during arrests. Following are the “Miranda Rights:”

- You have the right to remain silent
- Anything you say can and will be used against you in court
- You have the right to an attorney
- You have the right to have a lawyer with you during questioning
- If you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be appointed for you

U. S. Citizenship Survey

FORM A: For use in interviewing those who have not yet taken the INS citizenship interview

1. How are you preparing for the INS citizenship interview? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Citizenship classes (or ESL/Citizenship class)
- ☐ English classes
- ☐ Assisted by a church
- ☐ Assisted by an agency
- ☐ Studied on my own
- ☐ Help from friends/family
- ☐ Other

If the interviewee did not take a citizenship class or ESL/Citizenship class, skip to Question 14.

The next few questions are about your citizenship class. I will be asking you how much your class has been helping you as you go through the citizenship process. For these questions, 1 means "Not Helpful," and 5 means "Very Helpful."

As you go through the process of becoming a U. S. citizen, how helpful is...?

2. Learning about United States history and government

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

3. English writing practice

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

4. English reading practice

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

5. Speaking English

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

6. Learning about the process of becoming a U. S. citizen

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

7. Talking to other students about the process of becoming a citizen

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

8. Getting support and encouragement from the teacher or volunteers

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

9. Getting support and encouragement from other students

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

10. Practicing for INS interview

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

11. Getting help with citizenship application (N-400)

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

12. How helpful was the class with the overall citizenship process?

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

13. For how long did you take the citizenship class?

1-4 weeks	5-8 weeks	8-12 weeks	More than 12 weeks
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14. How well do you think you would do on the INS interview, if you had not taken the class?

Not nearly as well

Almost as well

Just as well

15. Which parts of the INS interview do you think will be difficult? (Mark all that apply)

English

Other _____

U. S. History/Government

Nothing will be difficult

Answering questions from N-400 application

16. How satisfied are you with the way the INS has treated you so far?

Very
Dissatisfied

Somewhat
Dissatisfied

Neutral

Somewhat
Satisfied

Very
Satisfied

The last few questions are about you.

17. What is your country of origin? _____

18. What is your primary language? _____

19. What is your age?

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65 and older

20. For how many years have you lived in the United States? _____

21. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

- _____ Grade school or less
- _____ Some high school
- _____ HS diploma or GED
- _____ Some college
- _____ 2-year college degree
- _____ 4-year college degree
- _____ Graduate or professional degree

U. S. Citizenship Survey

FORM B: For use in interviewing those who have taken the INS citizenship exam (citizenship interview)

1. How did you prepare for the citizenship interview? (Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Citizenship classes (or ESL/Citizenship class)
- ☐ English classes
- ☐ Assisted by a church
- ☐ Assisted by an agency
- ☐ Studied on my own
- ☐ Help from friends/family
- ☐ Other

If the interviewee did not take a citizenship class or ESL/Citizenship class, skip to Question 14.

The next few questions are about your citizenship class. I will be asking you how helpful you think your class was as you went through the citizenship process. For these questions, 1 means "Not Helpful," and 5 means "Very Helpful."

As you went through the process of becoming a U. S. citizen, how helpful was...?

2. Learning about United States history and government

1	2	3	4	5
Not Helpful				Very Helpful

3. English writing practice

1	2	3	4	5
Not Helpful				Very Helpful

4. English reading practice

1	2	3	4	5
Not Helpful				Very Helpful

5. Speaking English

1	2	3	4	5
Not Helpful				Very Helpful

6. Learning about the process of becoming a U. S. citizen

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

7. Talking to other students about the process of becoming a citizen

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

8. Getting support and encouragement from the teacher or volunteers

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

9. Getting support and encouragement from other students

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

10. Practicing for INS interview

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

11. Getting help with citizenship application (N-400)

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

12. How helpful was the class with the overall citizenship process?

1	2	3	4	5
Not				Very
Helpful				Helpful

13. For how long did you take the citizenship class?

1-4 weeks	5-8 weeks	8-12 weeks	More than 12 weeks
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The next few questions are about the INS interview.

- 14. How well would you have done on the INS interview, if you had not taken the class?**

Not nearly as well

Almost as well

Just as well

- 15. How many questions were asked at the INS interview?**

1-10

11-20

More than 20

I don't remember

- 16. On a scale of 1-5, with 1=Very Easy and 5=Very Difficult, how difficult was the interview?**

1

2

3

4

5

Very
Easy

Very
Difficult

- 17. Which parts of the INS interview were difficult? (Mark all that apply)**

English

Other _____

U. S. History/Government

Nothing was difficult

Answering questions from N-400
application

- 18. How satisfied are you with the way the INS treated you in the interview?**

Very
Dissatisfied

Somewhat
Dissatisfied

Neutral

Somewhat
Satisfied

Very
Satisfied

- 19. How satisfied are you with the way the INS has treated you overall?**

Very
Dissatisfied

Somewhat
Dissatisfied

Neutral

Somewhat
Satisfied

Very
Satisfied

The last few questions are about you.

20. What is your country of origin? _____

21. What is your primary language? _____

22. What is your age?

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65 and older

23. For how many years have you lived in the United States? _____

24. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

- _____ Grade school or less
- _____ Some high school
- _____ HS diploma or GED
- _____ Some college
- _____ 2-year college degree
- _____ 4-year college degree
- _____ Graduate or professional degree

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